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CONTENTS

	Page
Comments	193
Who's in Charge of India?	195
A London Diary. By Critic	196
Travelling Home. By Frances Cornford	196
This England	196
The Opposition in Hungary	197
Employment and Liberty. By Rt. Hon. Walter Elliot, M.P.	197
A Dramatist's View. By J. B. Priestley	198
Falkland. By A. L. Rowse	199
Plays and Pictures	200
The Movies. By William Whitebait	200
Correspondence	200
From W. Empson; S. Anstey Cooper; C. J. Varney; R. D. Reid; Joseph Edwards; T. E. Naylor, M.P.; George Catlin; Dr. Marie C. Stopes; and others.	
Books in General. By G. W. Stonier	203
Reviews:	
New Novels. By Philip Toynbee	204
A Nineteenth-Century Rebel. By Harry Roberts	204
The Starry Plough. By Norman MacKenzie	205
Very Heaven. By Raymond Mortimer	206
Shorter Notice	206
Week-end Competitions	207

BACKING THE WRONG HORSES

Mr. Churchill did full credit to the good news about submarine war, progress on the battlefields and efforts to co-ordinate our policy with Russia's. At the coming conference between the three Foreign Offices there is much to discuss, for we doubt whether agreement yet exists, even in outline, about the settlement with Germany, the reorganisation of Europe, or the nature of the future World Authority. Whether on all these matters Moscow has yet worked out any definite plan we do not know, but it is hard to see how any American representative could finally commit his country, until after the elections of next year. Any settlement in this war must be global and organic. It is not possible to leave the question of Germany out of the general framework and solve it in a vacuum. We should not expect from this first conference more than a voyage of exploration over this wide field, all of it mined and strewn with obstacles. For that reason the promise of a permanent commission of the three Allies to discuss current questions affecting the whole Mediterranean area marks an even more important advance. As the war nears the Balkan Peninsula Russia's interests are even more deeply involved than our own and the need for a working understanding over politics as well as strategy is imperative.

Mr. Churchill made his answer to those who have criticised the delay that elapsed between Mussolini's fall and the landing on the Italian mainland. The interval was long and it enabled the Germans to mass a formidable army in North Italy. The layman is inclined to argue that if September 15 was fixed as the date for the landing on the assumption that the Italians would oppose us, it should have been possible to hasten it by much more than a week, when it turned out that the Italians would actually help us. The official reply is that the technical job of arranging transport for a great army is under any circumstances prolonged and intricate. But that does not remove the strong impression that Allied plans have been dangerously inelastic. Our Intelligence seems to have failed to acquaint the staff with the real state of Italian opinion; otherwise the expedition to Sicily could have occurred much earlier. But Intelligence never appreciates the value of a popular movement if it has a revolutionary character.

Mr. Churchill suffers from the same defect. What disturbs us in his conduct of the war is his neglect of psychology and his tendency to ignore the masses, both in the subjugated and in the Axis countries. How could Mr. Churchill avoid mentioning the vital fact that the brave men who are now fighting the Nazis in occupied countries, sometimes, as in the Balkans, with marked success, cannot in the nature of things maintain the virility of their attack if their hopes of Allied invasion are too long deferred? Again, as we read the events in Italy, Mussolini was overthrown first of all by the workers who struck in Turin and Milan and then by the refusal of their brothers in the army to risk their lives for his regime. We doubt whether the personality of Badoglio or the tarnished prestige of the House of Savoy added anything at all to the weight of the general will. All they did was to register it. Today the real moral force on our side comes not from this pair of turncoats, but from the popular movement of resistance organised by men who never bent their heads to the tyrant during twenty years of slavery. We missed in Mr. Churchill's speech any word of recognition for the courage of these men or the services they have rendered. It will damp their enthusiasm, as they struggle unaided with the Germans in the cities and mountains of the North to learn from Mr. Churchill's mouth that the weak king of whom they wish to rid themselves is still for us the only authentic head of the Italian people. His demand that anti-Fascist exiles should fight behind Badoglio will cause general dismay. Again Mr. Churchill missed the chance of softening for these men who are risking their lives for the common cause as surely as our own troops, the crudity of "unconditional surrender." All he told them of the settlement he means to dictate is that the Italian Empire is irretrievably lost. Over that the workers and professors will not grieve. But by a happy accident in the debate a really valuable assurance was conveyed by Mr. Eden. He denied the widespread slander that we propose to annex Sardinia and Sicily. We have argued for many months that our intentions in such matters as this ought to be plainly stated. We cannot ask Italians to fight for us, while we leave them uncertain whether we mean to dismember their country. By delaying to deny these stories London and Washington have given them a needlessly long career of mischief.

The graver question turns on the state of mind of the German masses. Here again, Mr. Churchill gave no sign of recognising their importance or even their existence. But the evidence grows from day to day that Hitler now relies solely on terror to keep the German masses working and fighting. The terror is of two kinds. The hangman is now so busy on the Home Front that a sober and well-informed Swedish newspaper estimates that executions now average fifty daily. The reason for this slaughter is said to be that the gaols and concentration camps are so crowded that their population must be drastically reduced. There is no longer time to kill them off in the usual Nazi way by slow torture. A careful reckoning shows that within the Reich, without including the ordinary police, 900,000 armed experts in repression, S.A., Gestapo, and S.S., are required to hold the people down. The inference is that Hitler rules and commands without the people's consent. Outside the ranks of the Nazi Party he can have little trustworthy support. The next step in the argument is to ask whether any active revolt is conceivable, and if so, under what circumstances it could succeed. It could begin only in the army: Himmler's Pretorian guard must first be defeated. The support which prisoners of war in Russia gave to the Free German manifesto was not at first impressive. It was signed by a number of officers, among them a great-grandson of Bismarck, but none of them was of senior rank. Now three generals captured at Stalingrad have issued an appeal to the army in support of it. That would be startling in any army: coming from this disciplined Junker Caste it is a portent.

Dare we hope for more? That depends on the working of the other terror on which Hitler and Goebbels rely. They answer every inclination of revolt, with the argument that the United Nations are preparing for Germany a fate so unendurable that it is better to die in the last

ditch than submit. If Italians feared the loss of Sardinia and Sicily, Goebbels can point with less mendacity than usual to plans even more wholesale than this for the dismemberment of Germany. An influential group of Tory M.P.s would tear away the Rhineland and Ruhr. The Poles claim provinces with a solidly German population of 7½ millions, which they propose to expel. All such claims are in flat contradiction of the Atlantic Charter. Not under the best conditions, not even if they revolt and overthrow the Nazis, can the Germans expect to avoid a period in which they pay a terrible price for the horrors committed in occupied territories. Nor will mankind again trust with arms a people which has misused its strength with brute ferocity. Within their capacity they will have to make good in kind the material ruin they have caused. But do we intend to drive millions of German workers and peasants from the homes they have inhabited and the farms they have tilled since the Middle Ages? If not, is it beneath our dignity to say so? Silence prolongs the struggle, discourages all the democratic forces of opposition and adds to the losses and sufferings which the Russians and all the subjugated peoples have still to endure.

Bulgaria is Worth a Mass

The Balkans offer to our forces in the Mediterranean a field for action as inviting as Italy. About the moment when the Italian fleet sailed into our harbours at Malta, the Yugoslav patriots swooped down from their mountains to the Dalmatian coast and occupied the ports of Split, and, it is reported, Susak. Some of the Italian troops have made common cause with them. What is even better news, British *liaison* officers are said to have eased the feud between the conservative Mihailovitch, who represents the Serbian and royalist section of the patriots, and the "Partisans," who are largely Croatian peasants under the brilliant communist guerilla chieftain "Tito." The Germans have now only a few Croatian Fascists on whom they can rely and the doubtful Bulgarian army. The key to its future behaviour lies in Moscow. It is significant that Dimitrov, the hero of the Reichstag fire trial, has just addressed to his fellow countrymen an appeal to rise against the Nazis. The recovery of the Black Sea port of Novorossisk and the rapid advance of the Russian armies towards the Crimea may mean that amphibious operations in Bulgaria will soon be feasible. That prospect may have influenced Stalin in his restoration of the Patriarch of Moscow to his full dignity as the head of the Russian Orthodox Church. The Balkan peasant was always Russophil, but a godless Moscow was not for him a perfect spiritual home. That detail has now been put right: Bulgaria is worth a mass.

Greek Liberation

We, meanwhile, are missing chances both in the Adriatic and Greece, where guerilla forces are making notable headway. The Greeks would feel happier at the prospect of collaboration had not Mr. Churchill gone out of his way to back their king. King George is as much of a liability as the House of Savoy and for the same reason. He is inevitably associated with the tyranny of the Metaxas dictatorship. Greece, in any case, has a republican rather than a monarchist tradition. We notice that even the Greek Government in Cairo has now been compelled fully to recognise the importance of the "popular front" resistance movement in Greece and has received a further delegation from the guerilla troops. They came, on the evidence of the *Times* correspondent, to work out the details of closer military collaboration and, secondly, to discuss the future with the Greek Government. Once again they showed that Greek public opinion is dissatisfied with the pronouncement extorted after long delays from the king to the effect that after his return he would institute a plebiscite on the future government of Greece. They see in this the danger of a return of dictatorship set up with the help of Allied troops. They demand that the king should not return without a popular vote and declare that the result of his attempt to do so would be civil war. "It can be stated authoritatively," says the *Times* correspondent, "that the matter was recently placed personally and in all clarity before the king, who, before coming to a definite reply, was taken ill and is now convalescing outside Egypt."

The Doctors and Beveridge

Significantly, the annual meeting of the B.M.A. is being invited to declare in favour, not of the tolerably advance programme of the B.M.A.'s own Medical Planning Commission of last year, but of the principles laid down in its earlier report issued in 1938. This sounds very much as if the Commission's comparatively enlightened proposals for health centres and group practice are to be thrust aside, as suggesting too much of a step in the direction of a salaried service. The Government, through Mr. Ernest Brown, is no doubt still talking of its wish to ensure the provision of an all-round medical service for everybody, as it promised in the debate on the Beveridge Report. But it is also crying out very loudly about its determination to preserve the rights of private practice; and Mr. Brown is being very careful to pick his words so that they commit him to nothing about ways and means. Presumably, the doctors' present attitude is in part one of manœuvring for position; and the Government, for its part, is waiting to find out how determined the doctors are to fight against any plan on Beveridge lines. But how long is this manœuvring to be allowed to go on? Month succeeds month, and year, year; and not one important issue of reconstruction is settled. Sir William Jowett's answer to the Social Security League deputation which is to visit him next Monday will be some index of Government activity. The deputation, led by Sir Ronald Davison, will include Lady Violet Bonham-Carter, Seebohm Rowntree, Dorothy Elliot, Barbara Wootton and Edward Hulton; Sir William will be asked for a White Paper disclosing his preparations for carrying out the Beveridge scheme.

Beveridge and the Friendly Societies

It was by no means a foregone conclusion that the Friendly Societies, which administer their own voluntary benefits and would have been given a full chance of continuing as agents for the State under the Beveridge Plan, would join hands with the profit-seeking Insurance Companies to oppose it. This, however, is what they have most unfortunately done. In effect, what the Friendly Societies are demanding is that both they and the life offices shall be allowed to continue to administer social security benefits, while accepting the principle that these benefits shall be uniform for all contributors. This means, as Sir William points out, that they will lose all the incentives to cheap and efficient administration which are afforded by their present power to pay varying benefits, and will be merely handing out State money and using their position as the distributors of public benefits to tout for private business on their own behalf. Sir William rightly argues that such an arrangement cannot last "because any agency which is administering public money without any financial responsibility must ultimately come under State control." As against what the Friendly Societies propose, his plan offered them—but not the Insurance Companies or Collecting Societies—"a worthy, permanent, responsible place in the administration of social security."

Sir Kingsley Wood

Sir Kingsley Wood has never been a great public figure, but his sudden death will cause more political disturbance than the disappearance of many a more impressive personality. He will be missed in the House; he was popular, genial and friendly. He owed his influence to the tactful manner in which he represented Conservative interests in the National Government. No one stood closer to the Tory Central Office; no one was more quick in interpreting the Conservative mind. His influence goes back to the days when he represented the interests of the insurance societies in the battles with Lloyd George in 1911. He was closely associated with Mr. Chamberlain in the pre-war years, but was almost always successful in holding aloof from embittering controversy. As Chancellor of the Exchequer in Mr. Churchill's Government, he has been uniformly successful; he has taken the advice of economists who, it should be noted, have been remarkably united in this country during this war on questions of war finance. Some of the Government's success in avoiding inflation is fairly attributed to him. On matters of post-war social policy he would undoubtedly have played an important part. He was the spokesman for those interests which are most bitterly opposed to the Beveridge Scheme, and his long association with the insurance world peculiarly qualified him for this role. His death leaves Mr. Churchill with the problem of finding an equally efficient Chancellor. We hope Mr. Churchill will not feel it necessary at the same time to appoint in his place someone equally closely associated with the tougher of the vested interests who are the peculiar enemies of social reconstruction.

MR. CHURCHILL IN THE HOUSE

Noon, Wednesday

The Prime Minister displayed once more on Tuesday his personal and technical mastery of the House of Commons. The House had reassembled in restive, indeed uppish, mood; Sir James Grigg, who had the unusual ordeal of answering questions for forty minutes on end, succeeded (which is more usual with him) in causing offence almost all round by his sour and snappy manner and his bureaucratic appearance of inhumanity. ("Did ye no' get an inoculation for parsimony?" called out a Scottish Member.) But the moment Churchill appeared all was sunshine, benign expectancy, and cheers. He delivered his speech in two parts, before and after lunch—the First and the Second Lesson. It was generally well accepted; parts of it perturbed the more politically conscious sections of the Labour Party, but they found difficulty in defining the grounds of their uneasiness precisely, so skilfully did the argument embrace rival points of view without seeming to be self-contradictory. Thus both Second-Fronters and anti-Second-Fronters were in turn chided and appeased; thus, too, what looked like being an excursion towards Vansittartism developed into an attack on "Nazi tyranny and Prussian militarism" as "the two main elements in German life which must be absolutely destroyed." The Conservative leader forbore to add any condemnation of a third main element, closely associated with the Prussians in building up Nazism—the great industrialists. More disquieting was his unqualified endorsement of the leadership of King Victor Emmanuel; but, said he, apostrophising Italian Left-wingers, "there are moments in the life of a country when people cannot be more nice than wise"; and the subsequent assurance that nothing should prejudice "the free decision of the Italian people as to the form of government which they intend to have" must obviously cover their freedom to reject the monarchy. When Churchill, alluding to France, promised punishment for those who, "for the sake of personal ambition or profit, have tried to promote the victory of the common foe," Campbell Stephen interjected, "Such as Victor Emmanuel and Badoglio"; Aneurin Bevan laughed bitterly; the Tories said, "Don't take any notice"; but the Prime Minister, who can rarely resist giving prod for prod, said, "Some persons are reduced by our prolonged, unbroken success to little more than mocking laughter."

One curious, rather endearing, admission was that the Prime Minister himself depends partly on newspaper descriptions for his knowledge of what is going on in Italy. Members who had been here all the time had a fuller picture than he, homing from America: "I find myself at a disadvantage having had for five or six days to depend entirely upon the official accounts and not knowing quite what the newspapers were saying."

The debate which followed was somewhat

desultory and ragged: so long a speech needs some digestion, and reading as well as hearing. Moreover, digression is permissible in a debate which is "on the Adjournment." Vyvyan Adams, a "progressive Tory," said that absence without leave should not be allowed from a coal mine any more than from the Army, and condemned the "supreme mumbo-jumbo" of inviting an Italian admiral, after surrender, to inspect a British guard of honour. Ivor Thomas makes the most substantial Labour contribution to any debate on Italy; his manner sometimes recalls (to the Tories, infuriatingly) a University Extension lecture. He made one highly important point. Churchill (perhaps merely in the exercise of rhetoric) had said that the Italian Empire was "irretrievably lost"; this had been loudly cheered. So what, asked Thomas, is our Colonial policy to be? Churchill's phrase has dangerous implications. Surely we are not in this war to annex territory? But the idea of a common pool of colonies has been rejected; and is Libya, for example, "suitable territory for self-government?"

Because he had this major speech on hand, questions addressed to the Prime Minister were put off from Tuesday to Wednesday. He dealt with them then with the rosiest bonhomie. Many of them related to stars, ribbons, and medals; nobody suggested that most soldiers would rather have a guarantee of social security than a breastful of baubles.

Eden gave a slippery and sophistical pretext for the Government's persistence in obstructing Czechoslovakian-Soviet rapprochement. Emrys Evans, a Tory with a good record on Munich, made a poor show of answering on behalf of Oliver Stanley; Stanley's absence overseas was unfortunate, since several of the questions concerned the colour problem, which was, accordingly, not discussed adequately—the Constantine affair itself also being *sub judice*. But the general feeling of the House was evident; a row of white American soldiers stared wonderingly down from a gallery.

There were genuinely affectionate tributes to Kingsley Wood. It was impossible to dislike this bland, chubby little man personally. "He never lost his temper," was one conversational epitaph.

PONTIFEX MINOR

WHO'S IN CHARGE OF INDIA?

LORD WAVELL'S recent speech to the Pilgrims served to remind us that the man who will soon preside over the government of India is a rather unusual personality. His language reveals a sensitive mind and his values are not those which commonly go in this world with success. He will need for the tasks that await him in India gifts of sympathy and imagination which few Viceroys have possessed. But before he can exercise these in the field of politics, he will be confronted by a problem of administration that calls for a firm will and some understanding of economics. India is in the grip of famine. It is not the familiar famine with which our civil servants know how to deal. This is not "an act of God" due to a failure of the rains, nor is it local. It is widespread, though it is severer in Bengal than elsewhere. It began with the loss of Burma two years ago and the cessation of its exports of rice. The scarcity of food-grains led to hoarding, and that in turn caused a rise of prices which went on until the other day with hardly an attempt to check it. Nearly every article of daily life is in short supply, while a part of the population has more spending power than usual.

The descriptions of life in Calcutta that have now begun to reach us, after long months of censorship and silence, read like extracts from some medieval chronicle of the Black Death. The Government is doing its duty. Every morning its police patrols pick up from the streets the corpses of those who have died of starvation during the night. These average, we are told, about 150 persons daily. To grasp the full meaning of this ghastly figure, it must be realised that in an Indian city the poorer coolies normally sleep in the streets. They may be seen at nightfall any evening in Bombay prostrate on the hard pavement by hundreds and even by thousands. Too poor to rent even a few feet of space in an overcrowded hovel, they will lie down in the racket of a main thoroughfare and find, it may be, the air of the streets less tainted than that of any tenement within their means. It is these poorest coolies who lie down starving in Calcutta and never rise again. Their numbers are swollen by famine-stricken villagers who have taken refuge in the great city, perhaps because they have heard that the municipality has opened kitchens at which "gruel" is dispensed. Cholera, as usual, has come in the wake of famine, and the always inadequate hospitals are overcrowded. What is happening in the remoter towns and the poorer villages is a question our imagination hesitates to explore. The chief sufferers seem to be the landless peasants, whose ancestral acres have gone to the usurer. Their numbers have been increasing with staggering rapidity during the last twenty years. They live from hand to mouth: they have no reserves, not even a silver bangle on their women's arms, and when the price of rice rises to four or (in some districts) even eight times the normal figure, only one hope is left them—the municipal cart that will pick up their corpses from the streets at dawn.

What has the Government been doing to cope with this calamity? It failed to foresee what the consequence of the cessation of imports of rice from Burma must certainly be. After that date it went on exporting Indian wheat to the armies in Persia and the Middle East. In India itself the army gave a fillip to the rising prices by buying large stocks for its own stores. The cry went up for American and Australian wheat, but shipping is short and nothing has yet arrived. At the first sign of scarcity some provinces, notably the Punjab, which had a surplus of wheat, forbade its export to neighbouring provinces which suffered from a deficit. The hoarding which now became general was of two kinds. With a Japanese invasion in prospect, the little peasant hoarded in fear to keep his own family alive. But the dealers, the moneylenders and the landlords hoarded to profit from a further rise in prices, which duly occurred. Conditions approaching famine were already widespread nearly a year ago. Six months ago, the misery in the Bombay Presidency was so acute that in many places crowds were attacking the shops in such numbers that the troops had to fire on them. The Indian authorities are always prompt in their measures of repression, but the delay in devising anything more constructive is difficult to understand. It is only in this month that maximum prices for food grains came into force. Rationing will not start in Calcutta till next month.

The first difficulty that had to be overcome was a conflict of authority. The Centre was slow to admit that any responsibility fell on it: food is a provincial matter, and the provinces enjoy a qualified autonomy. Bengal in its turn complains that it needs powers which only the Centre possesses. These are not to our thinking impressive excuses. Emergency legislation has placed unlimited powers in the hands of the Viceroy and the provincial governors, who are themselves subject to his orders. When Congress had to be repressed, the entire coercive machine, civil and military, central and provincial, acted with impressive uniformity in obedience to a single will. The Congress provinces, more than half of British India, are under unqualified bureaucratic rule. Among them is Bombay, where the famine is only a little less severe than it is in Bengal. Even in the provinces which still enjoy qualified Home Rule, in most cases under coalitions led by the Muslim League, the governors' powers are wide, and at the elbow of each Indian Minister there are British civil servants who commonly understand the technique of administration very much better than he does himself.

The depressing record of these two years raises in our minds the question: Who really is in charge of India? The Centre has lost the tradition of autocracy which it exercised with assurance a generation ago. There is on the Viceroy's Council a majority of Indians, but they are his nominees, with no party and no backing behind them. The provinces are autonomous, but in more than half of them self-government is in abeyance. Where it still functions, only one province, the Punjab, has a Ministry which adequately represents the population it governs. Of the two major Indian parties, one is interested only in separating its Muslim provinces from Hindustan. All the leaders of the other, much the bigger of the two, lie silenced in our prisons. At this crisis in Indian history, Indian opinion has less influence on the conduct of affairs than at any time in the past generation, while the British rulers of the Peninsula show less of the capacity and the will to govern than they have ever exhibited before.

India's rulers are facing what may be, in these conditions, a nearly insoluble problem. They lacked the economic science which has enabled the Treasury at home to combat inflation with success. They had no Lord Woolton to organise the intricate business of food distribution. But even if they had taxed the profiteers, fixed prices and rationed both cloth and food in good time, it is doubtful if they could have succeeded without the confidence and co-operation of the people. Without tractors or science or fertilisers the peasants could not have multiplied India's home-grown food supplies. Everything has been easy here because the patriotism of a unanimous people seconded the Government in all it sought to do. Farmers vied with each other to plough up the waste land, and city with city to reduce purchasing power by mass saving. But the major part of India's population was first of all indifferent and then hostile to all the Government sought to do. It was dilatory. It clung to its inveterate habits of *laissez-faire*. It showed itself, as usual, more competent in ensuring order than in organising welfare. But if it had been a model of energy and foresight, could it have succeeded while the leaders of this nation filled its prisons?

A new reign begins with Lord Wavell's arrival. It would be tempting to speculate on what he might do to make a new start, if his hands were free. An obvious gesture is to release the political prisoners. On its side Congress would, of course, have to repudiate civil disobedience, which in any case has come to a dead end. That done, it may even be wise to give the Muslim provinces an assurance that they may form their Ulster, if they are really bent on it. On our side we should transfer Indian affairs at once to the Dominions Office. The princes should be warned that they must concede to their subjects the civil and political rights which prevail in the British provinces. Only after these first steps would it be hopeful to reopen the question of forming a *de facto* National Government. Mr. Brendan Bracken, however, told the American press at Quebec that all political questions in India have been put "into cold storage for the duration." If he spoke for Mr. Churchill and Mr. Amery, it is to be feared that Lord Wavell has gone to Delhi with his hands tied. He will be, we do not doubt, a more sympathetic and less wooden Viceroy than his predecessor, but India asks for something more concrete than sympathy. If another reign passes without an effort on our side to solve this problem, we may have to face a revolt very much angrier than any of Mr. Gandhi's essays in civil disobedience. Famine has sharpened the contrasts in Indian society. The rich are very much richer and the poor abysmally poorer. If some starve, others profiteer. When next the masses stir, their cry will be for land and rice as well as independence.

A LONDON DIARY

I WAS astounded the other day to see a letter in the *Times* signed by the headmasters of six famous public schools laying down the principles on which the public school system is based and saying that the first of these is Christianity. Now a lot may fairly be claimed for public schools, but Christian principles are not among their virtues. On the contrary. They are places where boys are sent to prepare them for privileged positions in a very unchristian world. They are taught physical courage, endurance, and school, class and national loyalty; they learn team spirit and the habit of getting along with other boys; they are taught to behave modestly, to put up with injustice and take the rough with the smooth. First among the advantages of the system I should put the early discovery that one must not expect too much justice in the world. It is one of the distinguishing marks of the public school man, who has so often been bullied, or caned for some trivial or accidental error, that he knows that the way to earn respect in after life, as at school, is to smile and say nothing if he can't retaliate, and to hit back hard, if he has the chance—especially, if he is the smaller and weaker party. This is a useful practical philosophy in a society like ours. It has nothing at all to do with Christianity, which, on one side, is a mystical faith which means little to most school boys, though often much to adults, and, on its ethical side, is a code of returning good for evil, offering the other cheek and loving your neighbour (even if he is a foreigner). This code has never yet been taken seriously in the West, least of all at British public schools.

* * *

I see that the correspondent of the *Times* in Sicily has commented upon Amgot's ban on all political activity. He says that the disbanding of the Fascist Party was welcomed, but adds, in a tone of pleasant under-statement, that the prohibition of all efforts to create any alternative organisation "has not been wholly appreciated by the Sicilian people." Apparently there are almost daily requests for permission to organise political parties. Naturally, no one would suggest that activities should be allowed which would interfere with military operations. But we want, as Mr. Churchill himself said, to avoid the odium of acting as an occupying Power among people who have welcomed us. We want to get over the period of military administration as soon as possible; that means that people should be allowed to express their views upon civil affairs and to choose who shall be their spokesmen. Nomination by the Allies is at best a very temporary expedient and is hardly likely to be interpreted as a token of liberation. I think it is more than ever necessary for the Labour Movement to insist that its voice should be heard in the higher councils and its representatives allowed to share in the work of Amgot.

* * *

Of course, the first halting steps towards democracy are not without humour. A friend who went with the Highland Division through the hill-country in Sicily sends me a charming account of a deputation of citizens from one of the tiny hill-towns that we occupied. They handed him a written protest in baroque Italian against the Fascist mayor and his associates, since arrested. With it was a Latin-American's translation.

> Dear Officers,
>
> F—— is amministrate buy Mussolini mens whit the same laws of Fascist tradiction. The people of towns dont like this situation who welcome your trips the same moment they arrive. The Mayor and his partners blame us for what we did so why we please you to cleanin of the city all and by the city court judge Antonio Makra the only man who doin everythins correct.

He also tells a rather exciting story of a lawyer who mounted a balcony to cry "This is the first free speech in Sicily for twenty years. Down with Fascism! Long live democracy!" Even the official account says this was "greeted with enthusiasm." Our troops must find the inspiration of liberation infectious.

The story of Bernard Shaw's marriage to an "Irish heiress" is told in Hesketh Pearson's Biography. There are a few things I should like to add of my own knowledge. Shaw had a host of women admirers, and I have always thought that one of the best tributes that could have been paid to any woman was a remark about Mrs. Shaw made to me by one of these old admirers. She said: "Charlotte Townsend was the one who deserved him. She saved his life and gave him his chance to do his work; and they have been happy." Whenever I have met Mrs. Shaw, I have thought how very much she remained herself. She was full of sense and kindness. She had great natural dignity and she was not there merely because she was the wife of G.B.S. She deliberately gave up a career of her own for what she knew would be a better career with Shaw. When I think of the lives of the great artists and dramatists I can scarcely call to mind one so fortunate in his married life. Mrs. Shaw appears indirectly in several of the plays. We know the love letters he wrote to famous women like Ellen Terry and Mrs. Pat Campbell; we know about his unique friendship with Beatrice Webb, who was perhaps alone in daring to scold him and argue with him as his intellectual equal. There may even, for all I know, have been an Orinthia with whom he wrestled on the floor like the King in the Apple Cart. But there was no-one who competed even for a minute with the Queen. I recall a passage in another play, where the wife of the greengrocer says that, however much she may enjoy flirting with other men, there is not one of them she would not cut in slices and boil for her husband's dinner if she thought it would do him any good.

* * *

She swayed about in the Underground, shouting anti-Jewish slogans. She was apparently drunk, but drunkenness is so good a cover for the propagandist that I was myself a little suspicious. No one interferes with a "drunk"; no one wants to be "mixed up with anything," and so everyone looks the other way and pretends not to listen. On this occasion only an R.A.F. boy said, not loud enough for anyone but his immediate neighbours to hear, "she ought to be locked up with Mosley." He had the right approach. The present spate of anti-Semitism is deliberately fostered for political ends and the right reply to those who spread it is: "Oh, I did not know you had become a Fascist," or "That I know is what Dr. Goebbels wants us to think." It is very important to understand the political meaning and the deliberate "demoralisation" of anti-Semitism; it seems to have been increasingly encouraged since some of the 18B people were released, and part of the propaganda is to suggest that anti-Semitism is a natural development unconnected with Fascism. Of course, there is always plenty that can be innocently said against any other foreign group within one's own country, and some of the Jews act in a way that gives colour to the propaganda. But the art of propaganda is to exploit the development of an existing sentiment. It is time, I think, for someone in authority to make a public statement on the subject, making it clear that anti-Semitism is part of enemy propaganda. At present it is spread through a number of organs of the press, through publishing companies which do not even scruple to issue editions of such fantastic concoctions as the "protocols of the elders of Zion," and by individuals who begin whispering campaigns in public houses. The phrases used are too uniform and too coincident in time to be a spontaneous expression of public feeling. The oddest document of this character that I have seen recently is a bulletin apparently distributed amongst doctors, issued by a group calling themselves "The Medical Policy Association." Beginning with an attack on the idea of public health service, the document proceeds to the wildest lengths of anti-Semitism, and manages to introduce the "protocols of the elders of Zion" apparently as an argument against the Beveridge Plan!

Mrs. Roosevelt's story of the American sniper who wanted to know how to kill the Japanese when they camouflage themselves out of sight, is so good and tells English readers so much about American politics that I must repeat it, even at the risk that some readers will have already seen it in print. The American was told to shout "To hell with Hirota" which would so outrage the Japanese that he would make himself a target by jumping up to reply. He came back downcast from his first attempt. He explained: "When I shouted 'To hell with Hirota,' the Japanese jumped up all right, but he shouted 'To hell with Roosevelt,' and I could not shoot a fellow-Republican, could I?" CRITIC

TRAVELLING HOME

The train. A hot July. On either hand
Our sober, fruitful, unemphatic land,
This Cambridge country plain beneath the sky,
Where I was born, and grew, and hope to die.

Look, where the willows hide a rushy pool,
And the old horse goes squelching down to cool,
One angler's rod against their silvery green,
Still seen to-day as once by Bewick seen.

A cottage there, thatched sadly like its earth,
Where crimson ramblers make a short-lived mirth;
Here only flies the flick-tail cows disturb
Beyond the shaven meads and willow herb.

There, rounded hayricks, solemn in the yard,
Barns gravely, puritanically tarred;
Next heavy elms that guard the ripening grain,
And fields, and elms, and corn, and fields again.

Across the soft savannahs of the corn,
Like ships the hot white butterflies are borne,
While clouds pass slowly on the flower-blue dome,
Like spirits in a vast and peaceful home.

Over the Dyke I watch their shadows flow,
As the Icenian watched them long ago;
So let me, like this Cambridge calm July,
Fruitfully live and undistinguished die.

FRANCES CORNFORD

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to J. Thompson.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Lady Montgomery, mother of General Montgomery, at Brixton yesterday, said that the last time her son was in London he went to get his hair cut. When it was finished there was a rush by customers and staff to collect the clippings.—*News Chronicle.*

Mussolini ranks very high among war criminals. His life is forfeit, but he must have fair trial and an orderly execution.—*Sunday Express.*

For carrying a telescope without a permit while deer-stalking, Beatrice Countess of Eglinton and Winton, of Oxenfoord Castle, Ford, Midlothian, was fined £2 or 20 days' imprisonment at Fort William Sheriff Court.—*Daily Telegraph.*

One of the reasons women students are not welcomed at hospitals is because they cannot play rugby football.—*Evening News.*

The indulgence of the audience is requested for Butterfly's baby. In the story the baby is two years old, but to comply with the Act only a child of 1 may appear on the stage.—*From programme of Santa Rosa Opera Company.*

THE OPPOSITION IN HUNGARY

No Axis satellite can have watched the downfall of Fascist Italy with more concern and apprehension than Hungary. Like Mussolini, Horthy brought his country into the war in the purely opportunist hope of territorial gain. Having realised that the Axis cause is lost, the Hungarian Government has been for some time engaged in transferring its eggs to the Allied basket. From the events leading up to and following Italy's surrender it hopes to learn just how far it need go in this ticklish process; for besides transferring the eggs, it is determined to make the traditional Magyar omelette without breaking more of them than is necessary.

Hungarian spokesmen are right when they insist that recent events have not altered the course which Hungarian policy has followed since the last war. Revisionism—the Hungarian form of aggression and territorial expansion—is both the effect and the cause of the fact that Hungary still has the most backward social structure in Europe. Revision of the Trianon frontiers is necessary in order to restore those lost estates on which the power of the ruling class is based; at the same time this demand has been used for 23 years as a means of diverting the attention of the people from the need for social and economic reform. That is why Hungary's policy towards her neighbours has been entirely negative and disruptive; and why she so readily accepted the German bribes of Czechoslovak, Rumanian and Yugoslav territory which finally brought her into this war. Without revisionism the Horthy regime has no meaning. But this regime, though built up by the methods of terror and violence which Fascism has since made so familiar has been maintained by more subtle means than Mussolini's or Hitler's. The "regime" in Hungary has always been kept distinct from the "Government." Thus by changing the Government (or at least its name) from time to time the real rulers of Hungary have been able subsequently to evade responsibility for anything unpleasant that may have had to be done. This, again, has made it possible (and indeed necessary) to preserve the facade of constitutionalism—toleration of the Trade Unions, parliamentary debate, a sham electoral system, freedom of expression in the (ultimately Government controlled) press, and the existence of an open opposition—which has saved the Horthy system from much of the odium incurred by other authoritarian regimes.

It is this investment in reinsurance which is paying full dividends now, in the sense that when it becomes necessary to throw out the Kallay Government and finally disengage from the Axis entanglement, Hungary will have not one Badoglio but a whole series of them, nicely graded from Right to Left to meet the needs of the moment. Count Stephen Bethlen, whose "pro-British sympathies" are being so assiduously advertised by his agents in Switzerland, Sweden and elsewhere, is only one of these. Since he has kept out of politics since 1931, it is thought safe to assume that the world may have forgotten his part in helping to overthrow the progressive regime of Count Karolyi in 1919, and the fact that he re-established the already bankrupt Horthy Government in 1922 by abolishing the secret vote (except in a few towns) and otherwise "fixing" the election of himself as Prime Minister.

Or, perhaps, the world will remember. This is where the so-called Left opposition comes in. This opposition falls roughly into three groups: the industrial workers, organised to a considerable extent in the Trade Unions and represented politically by the Social-Democratic Party, which is still allowed five seats in Parliament; the peasants and small farmers, who are for the first time becoming organised in the Peasant Union, and are also represented in Parliament by the Independent Smallholders' Party; and the middle class intellectuals. The Peasant Union has formed a special section for the landless agricultural labourers. It seems to have had a great success in its recruiting drive throughout the country; and its president, Ferenc Nagy, who is also a leading member of the Party, and who obtained official sanction for his movement by promising not to engage in politics, has since frankly stated his case both in Parliament and outside. Recently he has declared his Party's willingness to co-operate with the Social-Democrats, whose leader, the aged Trade Unionist Karoly Peyer, has likewise emphasised the need for collaboration. Together with the less well organised progressive intellectuals, these groups have proclaimed what is known as the People's Front, with a common programme based on elementary demands for social justice, freedom of association, freedom of expression, land for the peasants, and so on.

The importance of this movement lies in the prospect it offers that for the first time in Hungary the workers and peasants may be able to come together in a common cause. The danger of this union, should it really materialise, was quickly perceived by the other side. The press of the extreme Right—the Hungarian Nazis—who had long ago failed to take in either the workers of the peasants with their shallow promises—stopped attacking the Government and called for a counter-union of the Right. The Catholic press denounced the very idea of working class unity as anti-national, anti-Christian and "Marxist." A Government paper asked:

> Why is a united front of workers, peasants and middle class intellectuals necessary? Have we not the same aim, which is to preserve the future mission of Hungary in Central Europe? . . . And if we have, do we need suspicious activities which are aimed at seizing control of the nation's destiny? Have we not a Government which still preserves the interests of a united Hungary?

Finally, the Prime Minister Kallay felt it necessary to air the matter in Parliament. On May 29th this year he said flatly:

> Such a movement does not exist. If it did, and if it were of such a colour as to draw classes of differing races and differing social and economic positions into such thoughtlessness that they should gather those anti-national elements which perhaps may be found scattered here and there throughout the nation, then it would find the whole authority of the State opposed to it.

Since May, however, things have changed. In that same speech Kallay declared that the only solution of the Jewish problem in Hungary was deportation, and that the only obstacle to this solution was the difficulty at present of finding a suitable dumping ground. Now a Jew—the big capitalist and former president of the powerful Industrialists' Association, Ferenc Chorin—has been re-instated as a member of the Upper House. (Naturally the expropriation of less powerful Jewish landowners continues). We may shortly expect to see the whole authority of the State not opposed to the People's Front (or whatever less compromising name it may be induced to adopt) but behind it and even in it. Infiltration would be easy with the help of such well-placed collaborators as Prof. Gyula Szekfü, a nationalist of standard type, who has gained a reputation as a "liberal" by eschewing straight politics for semi-philosophical theorisings. Or a more practical politician may be found in the unprincipled careerist Rassay. This Swabian Ferman (his real name is Rasch) was Secretary of State in the Ministry of Justice during Horthy's bloody assize in 1919; shortly after a lucky chance preserved him from the mortal effects of a bomb placed by one of the White terrorist gangs, and he at once turned "democratic." He acquired a Jewish-Liberal newspaper and a Party with the attractive name of "Citizens' Freedom," and has since had only one ambition: to get back into the Government.

Thus the Hungarian opposition finds itself in a quandary. In the name of "national unity," it is being taken up by the Government which for 20 years has only tolerated its existence under the constant threat of suppression, and which it is itself pledged by implication to overthrow. Already the Government's official news agency has started giving publicity to the meetings of opposition Parties, and it was the Social-Democratic organ whose columns were used by the Government for an appeal to spare Budapest—the "workers' city"—from Allied bombs. Confused and disorientated as they are by 20 years of revisionist propaganda, the masses may not find it easy to see through such manœuvres. Further, any of their leaders who may be able to think straight will look for signs of encouragement from abroad. From this country they have as yet found no clear assurance for the future. They can but recall the part played by the Allied Commissions after the last war in re-establishing the forces of reaction after the two revolutions, and may justifiably ask whether that is all the reward they can expect this time again. They may well be fearful of a peace with the counter-revolutionaries still in power.

On the other hand, the Opposition itself must be ready to answer some leading questions. Are they prepared, if they profess adherence to the Allied cause, to accept the implication of a 20-years' Anglo-Soviet alliance? Are they prepared to clear out the whole of the mildewed junk shop of revisionism and substitute a constructive policy, not only at home, but also towards their neighbours in the Danube Basin? A peasant spokesman said in a recent speech that in future it must be the self-conscious, serious people who must decide what sort of leaders the country is to have. How does he apply this statement to the present leaders of the country? Does he recognise the names of the former White Terrorists Magashazy, Hejjas and Uzdoczy-Zadravec among the leaders of the National Defence Association, Horthy's home security organisation, whose members are being systematically trained in the methods of 1919? Has he forgotten how the October revolution failed to prevent the disintegration of the Army—which Horthy is now consolidating inside Hungary's frontiers, appeasing the soldiers with bribes of small plots of land taken from the Jews?

It comes to this. The Hungarian Government is trying to withdraw from the war against the U.S.S.R. and would be glad to free itself from the Axis. It is trying to use opposition elements. With the memories of 1919 in our minds and the record of a 20 years' tyranny culminating in Horthy's collaboration with the Nazis, we should be foolish to put any trust in the pretended friendship of the Magyar landlord and bureaucratic class. Allied policy should repudiate these dangerous reactionaries and do everything to cultivate a genuinely democratic movement, and encourage it to repudiate any dependence on the discredited Horthy regime.

EMPLOYMENT AND LIBERTY

We in Britain have to study the New Economics, the economics of the era in which we now have to live, with special care. We have not the endowments, the margins, of the great self-sufficing communities such as Russia or the United States. We shall need to supply by the precision and flexibility of our thoughts the advantages which the other World Powers draw from their almost inexhaustible natural resources. We have done this before and can do it again, but it demands a singular open-mindedness and a widely diffused knowledge of what we are about. Nothing is more fatal than dissension amongst our own people, and dissension has no more fruitful source than misunderstanding. Economics is not a science. It is a branch of applied psychology—in fact, politics.

The Western States, the present leaders of mankind, suffer to-day from a feeling of rootlessness, and hence lack of purpose, in the life of the common man. "Humanity has struck its tents," said General Smuts, in the only real summing-up of the results of the last war—"and the caravan is once more upon the march." A grand simile, drawn from memories of the great Dutch pioneers, the Voortrekkers. But this caravan in the years before the war was not marching. It was wandering about. The caravan wants to camp. It wants to find its waterhole and pitch its tents. It wants

to lay out its lines, hold its council, sleep on it, and start afresh. The impulses of America, the impulses even of Russia, are to-day essentially towards stability. Let us get things straight, we feel, before we start. For at present, progress is rather like that of the scout in Stephen Leacock who mounted his horse and galloped madly off in every direction.

Yet at the same time the common man wants to take immediate advantage of the great expansion in productive powers which is one of the main causes of this very instability. He meets in Conferences, such as the Food Conference at Hot Springs, demanding a doubling of the world's agricultural production and a consequently increased industrialisation. In India, in China, all over the Middle East, he stretches out his hand for the switches of industrial power. I still remember a rubicund little Minister from Irak, at Geneva, who was reproached for the new glaring concrete roads, the blazing arc-lamps with which his countrymen had dispelled the Arabian Nights and driven dreams for ever from Bagdad, the city of Haroun-al-Raschid. "We like it like that," he said passionately, "we like it like that; we like it like that." So we have to find a solution which will take into account both these tendencies, expansion and stability. We cannot do it in a regime committed by its own declarations to the unlimited fluidity demanded to-day for international trade. And indeed there is a latent contradiction in the very demand, for it is often advanced by spokesmen who insist simultaneously in the same sentence on the utmost regulation and rigidity in domestic affairs.

There is a basic fact, a new manifestation of an old phenomenon, standing out more and more clearly as industrial civilisation begins to develop a code of its own. It is the paramount factor for which we have to provide. This is that the skill which a man acquires, a skill which can only be acquired once, or perhaps twice, in the brief course of a lifetime, involves almost an identification of the man with the job. The combination of the two is the new small holding, the industrial peasant's plot, whose tenure, like the peasant's land-tenure, is one of the dominant factors in his life, and the life of his community.

The common man nowadays acquires as one of his first tasks, a skill. He learns a craft, a trade, a mystery. Furthermore, it is, in general, part of a craft that he learns. He becomes almost a joint being, part steel, part flesh-and-blood, integrated with his machines, his "plant." He finds himself also linked up, bound up, with other such beings, inextricably dovetailed into a community from which he cannot withdraw himself save under pain of industrial death. This gives him a sort of economic claustrophobia, a feeling of being cribbed, cabined and confined; he organises desperately to come to the limits, and to surpass the limits of this confinement, in movements of a hundred kinds, for which he will make almost any sacrifice, including that of prosperity itself. A man in modern industrial civilisation who has "lost his job" reacts, not like a person who for the time being has nothing to do, or even who is in want, but like someone who has suffered a major amputation. Mankind willingly abandoned fluidity, nomadism, the hunter's life, for the peasant plot and the peasant security, as soon as it had the chance. This is that instinct, the peasant instinct, welling up from the very springs of conduct, and that is why trades unions are conservative.

This is at the bottom of all the pressure for safeguarding, protection, autarky, all the factors making for rigidity, of which so much complaint is heard. It is the old rigidity of the peasant reappearing in a different set of circumstances, that is all. The man with a skill is the man with a craft; he is the peasant in overalls. He cannot be dispossessed, or moved around, with impunity, any more than the peasant can be divorced from his land. What the apostles of free trade, the apostles of unlimited economic fluidity are advocating, is a continuous series of economic clearances. Now the clearances which drove out the Highlanders from Sutherlandshire no doubt sent them to better conditions—certainly to greater opportunity—but they were, for all that, "the Clearances," whose very name is still a wound, and an open wound. The same sentiment precisely begins to be evoked by the word "Jarrow." It is described under metaphors, analogies, drawn from life itself—"The Town That Was Murdered"—and the same sentiments would soon enough cluster around Clydeside, or South Wales, if the doctrine of economic fluidity were there applied in all its rigour.

It is strange that more attention is not being given to this aspect of affairs to-day. The whole Beveridge scheme, for instance, is argued as though it were a question of pension. But it rests on full employment—and Mr. Bevin has a great deal yet to say upon this subject which we have not yet heard, far more than Sir William Beveridge. We enjoy full employment to-day. This rests on two pillars, not one. The first is the unlimited market. The second is the power of direction, the unlimited autocratic power to require a man or woman to abandon their previous life-work—or to resume it; to go where they are sent—to stay where they are put. In short, the abandonment of liberty. Now, you can always have full employment at that price. Is the world willing to pay that price? And if not, at what lesser price can full employment be obtained?

There is a little sentence in the Beveridge Report, a cloud no larger than a man's hand, which has the same potentialities of flood and destruction as its prototype of long ago. It occurs on page 12 of the Introduction and runs:

> The making of insurance benefit without means test unlimited in duration, involves of itself that conditions must be imposed at some stage or another as to how men in receipt of benefit shall use their time, so as to fit themselves, or as to keep themselves, fit for service.

"So as to fit themselves," and the i's are dotted and the t's crossed in the paragraphs upon Assumption C; Maintenance of Employment. "The proposal of the Report is to make unemployment benefit after a certain period conditional upon attendance at a work or training centre." This involves, mark you, not merely clearance, but immigration; for very soon after the worker has been trained out of Trade A, he must reappear, a new figure, in Trade B. True, the Report says, "The proposal is impracticable if it has to be applied to men by the million or the hundred thousand." But any of us who have to deal with the transfer of peasants knows that their emigration, their immigration, even by scores of thousands, even by tens of thousands, nay, even by dozens, can form a most intractable problem. And, believe me, the attitude towards economic immigrants is identical with that which arises towards territorial immigrants. In fact it is the same thing. To each community the newcomers represent a pressure which is bearing upon their means of subsistence upon their political independence. This attitude may be quite wrong; it very often is quite wrong; but it is there—solid, enduring, undeniable. It cannot be simply waved aside.

To the overheads of establishing any new process must therefore be added the rehabilitation, maintenance, and/or transfer of the persons to be replaced, previously engaged in the work. And this on some level completely different from that of "the dole." We have solved the problem of "interim" unemployment. We have made no advance whatever towards the solution of permanent unemployment. The arrangements made could keep alive the body. The mind was deemed to be comprised therein. We have found out what the philosophers meant on this subject by ignoring it. We know now what is the matter. We do not know yet what to do about it. And this is the moment when a number of well-meaning counsellors run about explaining that all that is needed is to take the drug, disturbance, which caused the illness, in gallons instead of drachms.

It will not happen. These clearances will not take place. They will start, and then they will stop. And everyone will have a feeling of disillusionment, a feeling of hypocrisy in affairs. No doubt it will be blamed upon "the banks." Banks are neither gods nor demons to produce all the consequences for which they are held responsible. The consequences are produced by men saying one thing and thinking another.

We are at present in the economic Dark Ages, the ages of unrest, of folk-wandering. Europe solved that in the past by several devices; which produced the Middle Ages—a considerable advance on what had gone before. Chivalry for one thing—the dedication of force. But the great economic advance was the recognition of the man interested in his job—in that case, agriculture—the institution of the peasant, an advance upon the serf, who was in turn an advance upon the slave—that supreme example of economic fluidity. We are at the outset of a parallel evolution from fluidity to rigidity, or, if you like, from slavery to freedom, in economics. It will certainly involve some of the formalism which is justly charged against the Middle Ages. But they did at least produce a fixed base from which humanity was enabled again to go upon its adventures. And it is the infant lines of that fixed base which are the "barriers" against which backward looking reformers are crashing, against which they are complaining to-day.

WALTER ELLIOT

A DRAMATIST'S VIEW

Two distinguished players, Miss Lehmann and Mr. Redgrave, have recently made useful contributions to these pages on the subject of dramatic critics and the Theatre. As a dramatist who has seen about twenty of his plays produced in this country, and has also had some experience of management, may I add some comments of my own? May I also assure the serious reader that this is something more than a professional squabble around a mere triviality? There are signs that our people are at last wanting a genuine Theatre, an adult, vital, exciting drama of our own, and dramatic critics can do much to hinder or help the creation of this Theatre and its drama.

Unless our dramatic criticism changes rapidly and radically, we can only succeed in spite of it. Up to now it has been a grave hindrance. There are of course exceptions, and it would be a pleasure to name them, but we have not space here for the discussion of personalities. The fact that you may trust some particular critic does not weaken my charges against the general level of criticism, which directly influences the public and the Box Office, and may strongly influence writers, players, managers. And during the last twelve years, believe me, I have spent many hours, with a heightened blood pressure, reading theatrical notices.

The first fault of most of them is that, like their editors and their proprietors, they think of the Theatre as a minor branch of "show business." This compels some of them to write not as critics of a difficult art but as if they had been sent to the theatre by one of the ticket agencies or "libraries." On this commercial basis, a big musical comedy is naturally more important than any play, a star-studded light comedy ("the box office will be busy for months" they cry in ecstacy) is more important than any serious play, and any very earnest, out-of-the-ordinary little production, with no standing at Keith Prowse, is hardly worth mentioning at all. It would be more honest if all these notices came out under *City News*.

The next fault is the reporting of new productions without any kind of reference, even right at the back of the writer's mind, to the idea of the Theatre as a genuine and enduring institution. There is no suggestion in these notices of anybody—writer, director, player—contributing anything to a continuing body of work. "You can have a good evening at the Criterion," they say in effect, "but only a poor evening at the Royalty." (Whereas the sporting staff feel deeply that they are adding paragraphs to English History.) New York dramatic critics have often

seemed to me a savage and unpredictable tribe, yet oddly enough I have noticed in them a real sense of the American Theatre, and I believe it has helped considerably to give the American Theatre its reputation. But here, too many of the critics have never begun to think in terms of an English Theatre, more especially since the last war. Before 1914, I fancy, it was not too difficult for fairly successful dramatists to establish themselves in the public mind as such, but since then, thanks to this kind of criticism, which removes the solid background of the continuing Theatre, it has been extremely difficult for dramatists to establish themselves as anything but transient entertainers.

Moreover, we in this country suffer from a lack of good surveys, in book form, of contemporary drama. (Partly, no doubt, because our universities and colleges do not teach Drama.) Little books occasionally make their appearance, but they cannot be regarded as genuine contributions to dramatic criticism. And it is significant that in the *Britain In Pictures* series, which has had some official backing, the volume on *British Dramatists* ended with a hopelessly wilful and distorted sketch of our contemporary drama.

Another fault, which has had serious consequences, is the apparent dislike of any intelligent new-comer into the Theatre. Any sensitive writer, making his or her first appearance as a dramatist, stands in need of fairly sympathetic treatment by the time the first night is over, but too often he or she is most savagely mauled by the dramatic critics. For example, in 1938 I was associated with the production of a first play by R. C. Hutchinson, one of the best of our younger novelists. His play had its lapses, but they were the lapses of an intelligent creative mind not yet fully acquainted with all the demands and devices of the stage. Had I been noticing this play, I would have hailed Mr. Hutchinson with delight, and then gently pointed out the faults of this first play which, in spite of them, was well worth seeing. The sheer abuse hurled at such a promising new-comer should, in my opinion, be reserved for those richly rewarded dramatic hacks who write the same bit of nonsense over and over again. It is not the business of critics to make the entry into the Theatre of sensitive and intelligent authors as hard as possible.

One final charge. There are one or two dramatic critics here who do not commit these sins, who are excellent men of the Theatre themselves, and who have worked magnificently for it in the past. But now they have one grave weakness, which sadly reduces their value to the contemporary Theatre. They are convinced that no further changes are desirable—or indeed really possible—in dramatic technique. Once rebels, they are now reactionaries. Experiment ended with them about the time of the Barker-Vedrenne Repertory Season, thirty odd years ago. Those of us who wish to try a new trick or two are condemned, almost before the curtain has gone up, as being "pretentious," "fantastic," "woolly" and the rest. They even allow themselves to be caught in the oldest trap of all, for they will announce that a production that has caught and held the imagination of a crowded house is "not really a play at all." Nor is it simply a matter of technique. Themes must change as time moves on, and if the public mind can move with it, then so can the critic. There seem to me to be now thousands of younger playgoers who are far ahead of nearly all the critics.

If we are to have a real Theatre, we shall soon need a whole host of new dramatic critics. Where are these people to be found? They are to be found, in my opinion, among those persons, who exist in every locality that owns a playhouse, who have a passion for the Theatre. They are not as a rule to be found among reporters or local gossip-writers. In more than one provincial town I have talked to people who really understood, loved, and knew about the Theatre, and yet the theatrical notices in these towns would be scribbled by some member of the local paper's reporting staff who neither knew nor cared anything about the art of drama. A newspaper might have a C. E. Montague on its staff, but the chances are against it. And neither in the provinces nor in Fleet Street should dramatic criticism be regarded as a little extra staff job. It is hard work bringing a newspaper out on time, but it is hard work bringing a new play out on time, too. And between these essential, vital and challenging activities, some of us would like to see more co-operation and goodwill.

J. B. PRIESTLEY

FALKLAND

[Lucius Cary, Viscount Falkland, died in battle at Newbury, Sept. 20, 1643.]

Of the three famous men, John Hampden, Falkland, Pym, who died in 1643 in the first year of the Civil War, Falkland was not the greatest—that title must belong to Pym—but he was certainly the most charming: one of the most touching and unforgettable figures in the English tradition. No doubt a good deal of that attraction we owe to the wonderful portrait Clarendon painted of him in his *History*: the most moving, as it is the most justly celebrated, of that gallery of masterpieces. Of their friendship the old Chancellor wrote years after in exile at Montpellier, "From his age of twenty years he had lived in an entire friendship with the Chancellor, who was about six months older; and who never spoke of him afterwards, but with a love and a grief which still raised some commotion in him." That commotion he still communicates to readers. The nineteenth century historians were tougher—or more obtuse. Falkland, whose heart was not wholly with either side in the struggle, who was struck down in battle against Parliament for which he had more veneration than he had for the King, could not be expected to appeal to their crude, coarse sympathies, their magnificent sense of the obvious. Macaulay has a funny passage, full of high spirits and Philistinism, making a guy of Falkland's career: "He was indeed a man of great talents and of great virtues," it begins, "but, we apprehend, infinitely too fastidious for public life . . ." and Carlyle dismisses him in a footnote about his clean shirt on the day of his death at the battle of Newbury (September 20, 1643). Falkland's position to us—in this difficult age—is very understandable. To the Victorians, to whom everything was so simple, it was not. His tragedy was that of the moderate in time of revolution: he died in a cause with which he was not wholly in agreement, hating the struggle which rent the country and longing (as the great majority of people did) for a sensible course between the two extremes. But he was *caught* by his fate. A man of the greatest gifts and promise, he was thirty-three when he died. True, we should not know much about him if it were not for Clarendon; but his career has a certain symbolic importance.

Lucius Cary, son of the first Viscount Falkland, was of west country stock, like several of the poets who were the friends of his youth and whom he names in the couplet

> Digby, Carew, Killigrew and Maine,
> Godolphin, Walter, that inspired traine.

His mother was an Oxfordshire heiress, through whom he succeeded to the delectable houses and estates of Burford Priory and Great Tew. Upon the magnificent painted tomb of his grandparents in Burford Church you may see the little figure of the young Falkland kneeling, looking to the altar. In the Bodleian there is his portrait: that affecting gesture of the hand laid upon his heart, the dark, luminous, melancholy eyes, the look of refinement one notices in Caroline portraits against the hardness of Tudor, the brazenness of Restoration types. Succeeding early to his estates, rich, youthful, with a passion for learning and a genius for friendship, Falkland made his pleasant house at Great Tew in the Cotswolds the resort of the best minds in the university, of the poets and wits from London. His first devotion was to poetry; and chief among the poets of his circle was Ben Jonson, who wrote a fine ode to celebrate the passionate friendship that subsisted between Falkland and Sir Henry Morison, whose sister he married upon the brother's death. Thither, too, came the cynical Suckling, who celebrated the gatherings in his "Sessions of the Poets," Tom Carew, amorous but somewhat costive of verses, diminutive but gallant Sidney Godolphin, the much travelled Sandys. As the years went on, Falkland ceased to write verse and turned his attention to divinity and philosophical questions. Suckling lamented:

> He was of late so gone with divinity,
> That he had almost forgotten his poetry,
> Though to say the truth, and Apollo did know it,
> He might have been both his priest and his poet.

The poets were succeeded more and more by the divines from the university. There was Gilbert Sheldon, Fellow, and soon to be Warden, of All Souls, who was—like the young Cosmo Lang—born to be Archbishop of Canterbury. There were the amusing Dr. Earle, author of the delightful *Microcosmographie*; the witty Dr. Morley, whose promotion was held up for a time by a too happy reply to a grave, country gentleman, who, puzzled by the new-fangled Arminian tenets, asked Morley what the Arminians held; and Morley replied, "All the best bishoprics and deaneries in England." Above all, there were John Hales, "one of the least men in the Kingdom; and one of the greatest scholars in Europe"; and the subtle, questing intellect of Chillingworth, Falkland's mentor, who gave the philosophical tone to this circle.

It was that of a passionate belief in toleration. Chillingworth believed that the fundamental truths of religion were few and simple, that they might be ascertained from the Bible; and he wrote an important book which was a plea for Christian unity on the basis of the widest possible toleration. Falkland followed his lead with a *Discourse on Infallibility*, and two tracts. He had determined to learn Greek; and, because he was fond of the society of London, he made a vow not to see it again until he had learned the language. He not only kept the vow, but ended by reading all the early Fathers. One sees the picture: the young patron whose poetry was without inspiration, his philosophy without originality, yet whose gifts of mind and sympathy kept the circle together.

Upon this charming society there fell the thunderbolt of the Civil War. What added poignancy to their grief was that it was so unexpected. Clarendon remarks the calm contentment and prosperity of those years before the storm; and to the trouble of mind they suffered they added the singular faculty of expressing it in perfect, touching words. "All things progresse toward the fatal declination of our time," wrote an ordinary Kentish gentleman who watched Pym riding into London attended by hundreds of his supporters.

Falkland was elected to Parliament, and henceforth his life was a part of national history. He was thirty when he became at one step a leading figure in the Long Parliament, which contained a multitude of famous men: a contrast to the Parliaments of elderly men since 1918 who have such a record of disservice to their country. (Historians will do the latter, as they have done the former, justice.) Falkland and Hyde were united with Pym and Hampden in the attack on the King's personal government and on Strafford, who was at once its instrument and victim. Falkland voted for his attainder, though he wished to spare his life; he led the attack on Ship Money; he went all the way with Pym in the onslaught upon the Prerogative Courts, the institutions of authoritarian government. He had no love for Laud and was willing to see a reform of the Church and the Bishops out of the House of Lords: he regarded that as a matter of expediency rather than of principle. He was a latitudinarian and a toleranionist.

But he stopped short when he saw that Pym was pressing forward to a constitutional revolution. The united House was divided in two by Pym's revolutionary manifesto, the Grand Remonstrance, which demanded that Ministers should be responsible to Parliament. Falkland opposed this invasion of the King's constitutional rights. After the great debate far into the night—Sir Philip

Warwick describes the extraordinary scene—Falkland was left at the head of a large minority, the backbone of a party for the King, the origin of the Tory Party. It was to Falkland that the comparatively unknown Oliver Cromwell said that if the Grand Remonstrance had not passed he would have sold all he had and gone to America. "So near was the poor kingdom at that time to its deliverance," comments Clarendon.

Since he had broken with the Parliamentarian leaders and led the opposition to their course, the onus fell upon Falkland of advising the King. A man of honour, a man marked for responsibility from the moment of his entering into public life, he could not refuse the King his service, though he became Secretary of State with the greatest reluctance. Clarendon has a penetrating and affecting analysis of his dilemma, the call of duty against every inclination: "He had not the court in great reverence and had a presaging spirit that the King would fall into great misfortune: and often said to his friend that he chose to serve the King because honesty obliged him to it; but that he foresaw his own ruin by doing it."

Undoubtedly the motive that weighed strongest with him was the hope of using his influence to bring about peace. All through the winter of 1642-3 he worked hard at negotiations with Parliament; if it had rested with him the Treaty of Oxford would have achieved peace. But there were intransigents on both sides, and in the end his efforts were wrecked by the influence of the court camarilla and Charles's fatal devotion to Henrietta Maria, who had all the Frenchwoman's itch for meddling in politics. She wanted peace to come as a gift from her hands.

Falkland was despairing, and when war was renewed threw himself into the most dangerous and exposed positions: as he had done at Edgehill, so in the trenches before Gloucester, and at last at Newbury, where "in this battle the Chancellor of the Exchequer lost the joy and comfort of his life."

Historians have been very obtuse about Falkland's mind and motives, and how he came by his death. Clarendon is quite clear, and surely it is very simple. Falkland had courage and was "naturally inquisitive after danger"; but it was precisely because he was known to long passionately for peace that he thrust himself in battle into the place of greatest hazard.

In the end one thinks of him in those thyme-scented, walled gardens at Great Tew, walking with his friends among the violets and the limes before the War came upon them to scatter them for ever. And yet they will always have their place in the English tradition, thanks to Clarendon's imperishable portrait of them. Such things friendship, illuminated by genius, can do.

A. L. ROWSE

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Fuente Ovejuna," at the Unity

The first English presentation of this play by Lope de Vega would be a welcome event at any time; now, when all Europe is in revolt, the story of Spanish villagers, stirring against the injustice and tyranny of their feudal master, makes an immediate appeal. The analogy is helped by the translation, which uses a modern and colloquial, rather than a sixteenth-century idiom. But it has also meant certain weaknesses. Though appropriate enough to convey the tragedy and the humour of the times and of the story, the translation sometimes breaks down where an attempt is made to follow the poetry and the eloquence of the original. The climax of the play comes with the victory of an enraged people and their murder of the hated Commander, lord of their homes and their lives. But Lope de Vega was forced, by censorship or contemporary conditions of performance, to reassert the "reign of law" that the peasant's revolt had broken. The village of Fuente Ovejuna duly receives the royal pardon. The two final scenes in which this is granted, are an anti-climax, though they emphasise the strong sense of comradeship and mutual responsibility that binds the villagers together; and that, after all, is a main theme of the play. The simplicity of the decor and the very effective management of the crowd scenes, strengthen the impression of unity among the despairing serfs. To say that the audience as well as the cast feel the reality of the struggle is to show the success of this exciting production.

Walter Goehr Concert at the Wigmore Hall

Mr. Walter Goehr maintained his high standard both of programme and of performance at his last Wigmore Hall concert. Webern's orchestration of Bach's six part Fugue from the Musical Offering, with which the concert began, is a fascinating study in pure tone-colour. It is strange to hear a muted trumpet or trombone, a harp and a bass-clarinet taking part in a Bach Fugue, but Webern uses them with such subtlety and restraint that the structure of the fugue, far from being covered up by the addition of so much colour, stands out with the utmost clarity.

The first performance of Humphrey Searle's Suite for Strings revealed a new work of considerable achievement. Mr. Searle is as yet little known as a composer, but the Suite shows that he is a musician of undoubted technical competence. In form the work adheres closely to classical principles; in fact there is a tendency to attach too much importance to logical sequence with its necessary counterpart of balance and symmetry. The composer has not yet achieved that command of his medium which enables an artist to conceal the construction of his work. When one comes to examine the classical masters and their treatment of thematic material, one feels inclined to reverse the proverb and say *Plus c'est la même chose, plus ça change*. The same material is worked upon, but continually, imperceptibly, made new. To expect this of a young composer would be asking too much, but one was conscious in listening to Mr. Searle's work of a certain constriction and lack of suppleness that has something to do with it, and from which one feels that he will free himself with experience. There is, however, much to admire. First and perhaps most important is unity of style, and freedom from the harmonic preoccupations that still entangle so many composers. This music, profoundly contrapuntal in conception, manages when considered from the vertical aspect to avoid harmonic clichés on the one hand and disconcerting stridencies on the other; counterpoint in other words is not used regardless of the consequences to the harmony. Another of its virtues is that it escapes from the obsession of continuous rhythmical movement which is characteristic of so much contemporary music. The composer is not afraid of moments of calm; he is content to say what he has to say, and is not haunted by the fear that relaxation of tension will cause boredom. Lastly a feeling for texture, so important in string music, contributes much to the successful effect of the Suite. It is to be hoped that we shall soon be given an opportunity of hearing it again. Mr. Goehr gave a fine and sensitive performance of Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder*. The extreme skill with which this intensely moving work is written impresses one more at every hearing.

THE MOVIES

"The Battle of Britain," and "Stormy Weather," at the Tivoli

"Guerillas and Heroes," at the Tatler

It has remained for America to make the first full-length film of the Battle of Britain. Much of the ground had been covered by our own documentaries and newsreels of the Blitz, and if anything we have seen enough of it, both in fact and on the screen; still, the Americans have walked in, gathered the material and made a fine job of it. Not that *The Battle of Britain* can compare as a technical performance with *Desert Victory* or *Target for To-night*; there are no sequences to remember apart from their factual content; this is film journalism, with a damned good story, and nothing more. Familiar enough, some of it, and there are shots of crashed Messerschmitts and of enemy planes shot to bits in the air which have turned up before once or twice. But the whole thing is seen from the other side at the same time. Dover's white cliffs come into focus as the Führer peers into some telescopic instrument on the French coast; the Nazi invasion army waits for its triumphal moment and the Home Guard begins gingerly sloping arms; the bombers fly off at dusk and London is spread out below, with pin-points of flame appearing, before the camera-view changes to the blazing buildings and people packed in shelters. Seen thus, the Battle of Britain acquires a new stereoscopic depth. The film goes with a bang from start to finish, and the commentary is more fruity and more embellished with bursts of English song than our own puritan taste would encourage. This, by the way, is the first of a series of films to be produced by the War Department Special Service Division and released here by the Ministry of Information; the next instalment, one gathers, will deal with Hitler's invasion of Russia.

In the same programme at the Tivoli there is a delightful negro entertainment. I prefer my musical black; a blonde *Stormy Weather* would have been, for me, the usual glistening bore. But with negro eyes and teeth, with negro feet—"You got educated feet, mister," says someone to a stranger who starts tapping—all the dance mania, the shiny floors and ostrich feathers, the tom-tom and the favourite songs come to life. "Stormy Weather" itself is given a magnificent setting and its melancholy refrain follows the foot-loose couples in a rainy street. Fats Waller sings "Ain't Misbehavin'" as only he (or perhaps a Disney hippo) could sing it. The other stars are Bill Robinson, Lena Horne, Cab Calloway, and the Nicholas Brothers.

Guerillas and Heroes is the Russian hotch-potch of realism and melodrama with some magnificent moments. From an atmosphere of frontline yarning three tales emerge: Belgrade under the terror, a Russian village occupied by the Nazis, men in a disabled tank being smoked out and rescued just in time. Much the best is the middle one, "Village Feast," directed by Pudovkin. The invaders batter their way into houses, ravish, stab and hang those in their path and sit down finally to a wonderful feast at which they are all poisoned, including the old woman who has prepared it. This is drama on the heroic scale; the rest of the film has episodes when the reality in which such films are grounded startles.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

Correspondence

LENGTHENING THE WAR

SIR,—Some of your readers may have missed a recent speech by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade and others may like to be reminded of its implications. As reported in the *Manchester Guardian* of September 16th, 1943, Captain Waterhouse told the Federation of Merchant Tailors that the Germans were not going to collapse rapidly. "I don't want to see them collapse quickly," he continued. "I want to see them beaten to their knees, and then beaten to their backs. They have shown themselves fierce and ruthless animals, and the only way, other than death, with these animals is to break their teeth and shear their claws."

I leave your readers to decide on the taste, let alone the Christianity, of Captain Waterhouse's remarks. But it is disturbing to hear a member of the Government, albeit a minor one, lending support to the view that the war can end too soon. Those who speak so glibly of "teaching Germany a lesson that she won't forget," should ask themselves whether they are really prepared to prolong the suffering of humanity, soldiers and civilians, in order to try out a retributive policy of questionable value against Germany. Of course Captain Waterhouse would deny that he is deliberately prolonging the war; but he would obviously do nothing to help forward by political warfare an internal collapse in Germany. Such a collapse may or may not be far off, and may be total or partial; but it can hardly be denied that the fear of such a collapse can be a contributory cause of the military defeat of Germany. Fortunately Captain Waterhouse's sphere of activity is comparatively limited. It is to be hoped that the attitude of mind which he reveals is not shared, consciously or un-

consciously, by those responsible for military or political operations. "SOLDIER".

Somewhere in Britain.

BASIC ENGLISH

SIR,—It is natural to extract fun from Basic English, but someone might take the joke for the truth. Your grim and amusing prophecies depend on the assumption that everybody will use Basic and nothing else. This idea, if taken seriously, would of course be a typical neurotic phobia, like worrying because the alphabet will be forgotten unless those awful dictaphones are suppressed soon.

The present position is that very large numbers of children are taught English for three years or so at school and then forget it because they haven't reached the stage where it seems worth going on. If they can be given a usable instrument by the end of that course (not after two weeks) they are much more likely to keep it up, especially if there is a supply of books which they want to read written in English which they can already follow.

The great merit of Basic is not that it can be learned in two weeks (it can't), but that it is an excellent foundation for learning more English. It cuts out "Babu English" because it makes the learner see how wrong and workable the plain terms are from the start. There is really no literary objection to avoiding "Babu English."

As to the picture of Mr. Churchill trying to forget all the words that aren't on the list, you must consider what happens already. I am sure that Mr. Churchill has the civility to try to be intelligible when he talks to a foreigner whose English is weak. The usual trouble is that one doesn't know *which* words will be likely to get through; you keep finding that the man knows a learned word but not the plain word. It is not at all hard for an Englishman to get a working expression of which words are in Basic (they are commonly the words you would expect) and if you go wrong, well, you can have another shot. There is no need to make extravagant claims for the thing; the point is that it would be much better than what happens at present.

As for Mr. Churchill's fine sentence, an adequate version would be: "There have been two wars in my time in which all the powers of the United States have had to be used in a fight for existence." There's nothing to stop you putting in "the long arm of history, stretching across the sea," except that it rather overstrains the medium; better make it another sentence, if it is needed for the thought. Surely the mistake is in the idea that anybody would want to use Basic for a glowing rhetorical style.

As for Blake's Tyger, of course Basic doesn't forbid you to talk about it, any more than a pibroch or a diplodocus; you only can't assume that everybody knows about it already. To imagine that somebody is trying to take your pibroch away from you would show, I think, a rather curious readiness to take fright.

W. EMPSON

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N.W.3.

SIR,—Unlike your correspondents, Messrs. Griffin and O'Neill, I should like to express my heartfelt appreciation of the editorial of the previous week concerning Basic English. In my opinion the whole tendency of the latter for the foreign student, for whom it has been evolved, is towards a theoretically greater ease in speaking English, disastrously counterbalanced by considerably increased difficulty in understanding any of the hundreds of millions of present English-speakers, who for common, everyday purposes make constant use of words excluded from the orbit of Basic.

The supporters of the system appear to overestimate the practical value of an 850-word limit, easily exceeded by the average student, even without any special linguistic endowment. There is hardly a single potential learner of English who would not, at a fairly early stage of his studies, abandon automatically the clumsy paraphrases (e.g. "join of the arm and hand," etc.), to which Basic attempted to limit his means of expression, in favour of the accepted "monoverbial" equivalents ("wrist," etc.). Various factors would ensure this result: (*a*) human contacts (see my first par.); (*b*) existing English literature (the term being taken to include all written and printed matter); (*c*) a probable desire on the part of the learner to adapt his speech to that of the natural users of English sufficiently well to avoid making himself conspicuous in their company; (*d*) an at least equally probable desire to save his breath.

The possibility of "starting at scratch" with an English yet to be created would alone make Basic practicable; even then the language in course of time would reach something like its present stage of development—so inevitable is the process of enrichment—and Basic become an historical curiosity. So why all this trouble to turn the clock forward by turning it back? Let us face the fact that a language is not a mere logical or geometrical pattern, but the sum-total of the speech-habits of a great human mass; let it therefore be acquired by the present method, which may with advantage be improved in point of detail but not, however, revolutionised as regards its material. If the latter is in harmony with the speech-habits mentioned, then, at whatever point progress stops, the amount of English acquired can be left in its place as a foundation; "Basic," even as a "basis," leaves this much to be desired: that it must be dug out again piecemeal from under the finished structure.

S. ANSTEY COOPER
(Associate of the Institute of Linguists)

17*p* Beverley Road, W.4.

CASE OF THE HOMOSEXUAL

SIR,—I am glad to read the remarks of R. D. Reid on the subject of the Homosexual. The attitude of the law towards these unfortunate people is medieval, but unfortunately that is but half the story. The law thinks fit to send them to prison, where they come under the care of the Prison Commissioners. In quite a large number of cases this type of prisoner is left to serve his sentence without any attempt on the part of the authorities to give the man psychological treatment. The result is that he is liable to repeat the offence for which he was convicted and so become a further burden on Society. I have recently spent a short term in prison and was in close contact with four such cases. In addition this Council has had other instances of neglect brought to its notice. Whilst serving his sentence the prisoner is required to spend long hours in solitary confinement—an average of 14½ hours daily—with longer periods—up to 22 hours daily—at week ends. His reading matter is shabby to say the least, and the cell task monotonous. Also he lives an unnatural segregated existence. Is it surprising, therefore, that homosexuality is a major problem in the prisons?

Further, there is the problem of the attitude of the magistrates towards this type of offender. Prejudice and ignorance invariably occupy the magisterial chair. Witness the case of a man recently charged with indecency; medical evidence showed that the man was "nervous and very introspective." He had been charged three times previously, and was obviously, according to his doctor, "A psychological case."

C. J. VARNEY,
Prison Medical Reform Council. Chairman

SIR,—Miss Stiles asks me "and which experts have decided that all homosexuals belong to a congenital variation of the human species?" My answer is Hirschfeld, von Romer, Forel, Stekel, Hall, and many others.

My only object in writing to you was to plead for a revision of our criminal code, and not to start a psychological controversy. I hope, however, that you will allow me to quote from an account of Hirschfeld's work published just after his death: "Since homosexuality is congenital, it cannot be eliminated by

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ROUTLEDGE

MR CHURCHILL
commends
Basic English
"Here you have a very carefully wrought plan for an international language capable of very wide transactions of practical business and of interchange of ideas. . . . . Might it not also be an advantage to many races and an aid to the building up of our new structure for preserving peace."
HARVARD UNIVERSITY, SEPT. 6
The New Testament in Basic English
was welcomed by the public as a great achievement, and it ranks among best sellers.
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has been in preparation for some time, and, although delayed by wartime difficulties, is now in proof and will be published in due course.
Cambridge University Press

G. W. Stonier
SHAVING THROUGH THE BLITZ
Here is a funny book in which satire and eeriness blend. Fanfarlo and his adventures came out of the London blitz, when the Luftwaffe came and went, and not only the Luftwaffe but Invasion, the Black Market, the Jitters, Complacency, and a number of other things that distinguish the British way of winning or losing a war.
Hardly less important than the war itself is the war behind the scenes, the departmental war of experts, conferences and ideas that get no further. Fanfarlo finds himself involved again and again in that Armageddon of the home front; he may escape temporarily into private fantasy or the policeman's beat, but the Ministry of Babel sucks him back.
[6s net]
September 27th
JONATHAN CAPE

psychological means, and Kraeplin's claim to have obtained comparatively good results by hypnotic treatment cannot be accepted. Hirschfeld knew a large number of homosexuals who had undergone hypnotic treatment, but no one who had been cured. The same applies to psycho-analysis, in regard to which Stekel, one of the greatest authorities on the subject, writes that he had never seen a complete cure of homosexuality by this means. The most fatal advice a doctor can give a homosexual is to marry." Miss Stiles asks for authority, and there it is. It may of course be wrong, but as long as it corresponds with everyday experience, we cannot disregard it. Much confusion and conflicting evidence as to cure is caused by the non-recognition of the fact that very many people are bisexual.

R. D. REID

WATER

SIR,—I know of one Local Authority that largely from parochial pride preferred to replace its defective water supply by developing a new independent source rather than adopt the more economical and mutually advantageous policy of taking a part of the unexpectedly large surplus of an adjacent water board; and of a statutory Waterworks Company that, on the grounds of inadequacy of resources, declined to supply a few hundred gallons daily for a virtually essential war purpose, and yet—relying on its statutory rights—refused a prospective consumer of some thousands of gallons daily permission to take supply from a neighbouring undertaking whose trunk mains passed through the Waterworks Company's statutory area.

Had there been a competent co-ordinating or controlling authority some at least of the many water schemes independently provided by, or under the direction of, the various Ministries to meet their wartime requirements could well have been amalgamated schemes. Money would have been saved and, to a certain extent, wartime projects could have been designed to have post-war value to the community.

Local Authority administration deserves all encouragement, but it should be recognised that post-war conditions may imperatively demand all possible economy and maximum efficiency.

LINEX

ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION

SIR,—Having read Mr. Brewer's article *Stocks, Stints and Vested Interests*, I should like to say that I think he paints a rather gloomy picture of the present position.

It is to be regretted that no progress was made in the application of the technique before the war. In the state of inertia then prevailing this could be said of many new techniques, the development of which appear to have required a war to bring them about. Since 1942, when Dr. Walton and I presented a memorandum on the subject to the Agricultural Improvement Council, things have moved more rapidly. The first commercial centre to begin was started privately by Co. Devereux in Bucks. in September, 1942; the Cambridge Centre (a farmers' co-operative) and the Reading Centre began in November, 1942 and February, 1943, respectively. Since then there has been a tremendous interest in the technique, stimulated, to a large extent, by the findings of War Agricultural Committees who are now prosecuting the Ministry of Agriculture Livestock Policy and who find that, in many districts, A.I. is the only solution to the breeding problem.

In East Suffolk a farmers' co-operative centre is about to start with capital put up by members at 2½ per cent. and several other groups in other counties are on the move. I would far rather see developments of this kind than a clamour for large subsidies.

In Scotland the position is rather different. There has not yet been time for the necessary mental evolution; there is a religious bias to overcome in some quarters and the commercial milk producing farmers have yet to be heard from. In addition the herds of cattle are, on the whole, larger and each owner, taking a great pride in his bull, is convinced that he can pick a better one than his neighbour. But the general dairying situation is very similar to that in Denmark and in time A.I. in Scotland will make similar progress.

The attitude of the English Breed Societies has changed considerably in recent years. The English Jersey Cattle Club has had a long distance scheme working for over a year. Existing A.I. Societies are working in close touch with Breed Societies and the fact that our largest Breed Society has recently greatly simplified its rules on the subject is a sign of present progress.

JOSEPH EDWARDS,
Chairman, C.B.S.
Cambridge and District Cattle Breeders' Society.

"THE TRADE UNIONS LOOK FORWARD"

SIR,—In last week's article reference is made to "the vital question of Trade Union rights in any industries or services that may pass under common ownership after the war," and it goes on to ask, "If the coal mines or the railways, or the banks, or the insurance business were nationalised, would the workers in any or all of these groups lose their connection with the Trade Union movement?"

May I remind the writer that two outstanding examples of Trade Union organisation in State-owned businesses already exist, thus putting the ques beyond all doubt. The first is the Woolwich Arse establishment and the other H.M. Stationery Of printing works.

No Government could afford to go back on th precedents.

This fact emphasises the argument of the writer regard to the inconsistency of the Government denying Civil Servants the opportunity of ally themselves to the Trade Union movement.

House of Commons. T. E. NAYLOR

INDIAN FAMINE

SIR,—The Lord Mayor of London has, on vario occasions in the past, inaugurated public subscriptio for great charitable causes. China and Russ although vast sovereign States, have been b beneficiaries of such subscriptions in aid. The don have indeed felt it to be, not so much an econom necessity as an honour and sign of solidarity subscribe.

We have now the news of the appalling famine Bengal. There may be the food in India, and it w be the duty of the Government of British India the last resort to see to its proper distribution. B this will take time. And the people of this countr which has shown itself so generous to others, has quite singular obligation to display a sense of alivenc to the sufferings of our co-citizens in India. Cann the Lord Mayor take this fund also under his im mediate patronage?

GEORGE CATLIN
2 Cheyne Walk,
S.W.3.

RELIGION IN STATE SCHOOLS

SIR,—The press has given much publicity in th last few days to the Roman Catholic Hierarchy complaint of the "intolerable burden" on themselv to maintain their own schools. The boot is on th other leg; the intolerable burden is on Protestan who are asked to contribute towards the maintenan of Roman Catholic schools when the results a socially deplorable. For example, of the number juvenile delinquents in certain courts recently on 21.6 per thousand were from Council schools, an 45.5 per thousand from Roman Catholic schools With adult prisoners in this country, New Zealan and other countries, the same is revealed by th number of prisoners of different religions. By the fruits ye shall know them! Catholics cannot clai Protestant money for the maintenance of schoo which show such results.

MARIE C. STOPES
Norbury Park, Dorking.

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G. D. H. COLE

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DENT

BOOKS IN GENERAL

Mr. Hesketh Pearson, whose *Life of Conan Doyle** I recommend for an empty evening, is a lively journalist and a shrewd biographer. He belongs, I suppose, to the Johnsonian school, to the many Englishmen who appear to have inherited the great Doctor's commonsense without quite his learning or taste. At its best this school produces a Peacock, at its next best a Belloc or a Saintsbury; and on the lower levels we find such amiable exponents of the rule-of-thumb as Mr. Pearson and his friend and co-author Mr. Kingsmill. Most readers will have come across one or other of those talk-and-travel volumes, in which Pearson and Kingsmill have bumped round a countryside, muttering and guffawing, roaring at the view, capping the High Street with a bit from Shakespeare, egging one another on to opinionate about everything under the (sometimes watery) sun. Why was the beer always sour in station bars? Was Shakespeare's last phase his greatest? How could there be two opinions about the Sonnets? What about Wilde and humbug? What about umbrellas? Wasn't it George Sand who said, etc.? My recollection of the topics in *This Blessed Plot* that spluttered over Reading or Salisbury may have grown dim, but I remember vividly the pantomime horse that went round with a delight in its own antics. Both ends of the horse jabbered away, and it wasn't easy sometimes to distinguish back from front. The Pearson half was perhaps senior, more dogmatic, more trenched in some subjects and wilfully ignorant of others. He talked a good deal, in a rather rattling vein, about Shakespeare; and sure enough, a few months later, there was a Penguin *Life of Shakespeare*, with some background and the immense merit of being readable. Shaw popped up quite a lot too, to be followed by what I am told is easily the best record of Shavian talk and encounters. Having missed the Pearson Shaw (I shall be interested one day to discover how he justifies here his view that a man's opinions do not concern his biographer), I am glad to be in time for his Conan Doyle.

A small subject but obviously a congenial one; for Mr. Pearson has long had an admiration for Doyle, dropping the Conan, and his recent biographical adventures with Shakespeare and Shaw don't seem to have affected it. This dodging about among incompatibles may suggest a certain critical insensitiveness, but possibly, since a writer's opinions are so unimportant in Mr. Pearson's eyes, the art embodying them may also be of secondary interest. His object, at any rate, in writing about Conan Doyle has been partly to raise his status a little, but chiefly to give shape to a story which in the author's own *Memories and Adventures* was made conventionally flat. Not that, even now, it seems exciting or specially pointed, but one feels an affection for the stalwart, chivalrous, boyish creator of Sherlock Holmes, and the period colour and the etceteras lean surprisingly towards the grotesque. The chapter on Dr. Budd, a friend in the early medical days, is as extravagant as anything in Dickens. He had set up in Portsmouth a practice which he wanted Conan Doyle to share; and he began, in a huge half-furnished house, by making no charges to his patients except for medicines. At ten in the morning the day's business would start, with all the waiting rooms full and overflowing into the courtyard and stables.

> The patients had to walk upstairs to a consulting room on the top floor which contained nothing but two wooden chairs and a table with a stethoscope and a couple of books on it.
>
> Doyle then witnessed a series of scenes such as he could never have imagined or believed possible. Hour after hour the patients filed in and departed with their prescriptions.
>
> Budd's antics were incredible. He yelled, he raved, he cursed, he knocked his patients about, thumped them, prodded them, barged them against the wall, pulled them in, flung them out, and occasionally varied the proceedings by rushing from the room and bawling at the lot from the landing. Sometimes he did not even allow them to utter a word, but with a loud "Ssh!" ran at them, hit them on the chests, listened to their hearts, wrote their labels, and shot them through the door. He paralysed one old lady, the moment she entered by screaming, "You've been drinking too much tea! You are suffering from tea poisoning!" Before she could utter a syllable he seized her black mantle, dragged her to the table, and shoved a copy of Taylor's *Medical Jurisprudence* under her nose. "Put your hand on the book," he thundered, "and swear that for fourteen days you will drink nothing but cocoa." She lifted up her eyes, swore the oath, and was instantly hustled off to the dispensary. A portly male made a dignified entrance and was about to explain his symptoms when Budd caught him by the armholes of his waistcoat, thrust him backwards into the passage and downstairs into the street, and staggered the passers-by by bellowing after him, "You eat too much, drink too much, and sleep too much! Knock down a policeman, and come again when they let you out." Another female, who complained of a "sinking feeling," was advised to take her medicine, "and if that does no good, swallow the cork, for there is nothing better when you are sinking."

In the middle of this chapter there is a photograph of Conan Doyle looking as stolid and unimpressionable as a City Alderman. Nothing very much, one would think, could ever happen to him, and in a life that progressed from medicine to spiritualism and took in two marriages, two wars, writing, public life, and sport on the way, nothing much perhaps did. He failed as a doctor and succeeded with short stories. He put up for Parliament, not quite knowing why. A journey to the Arctic excited little more than the remark, "What surprised me most about the Arctic regions was the rapidity with which you reach them." The chapter on "Some Notable People" is followed in his autobiography by one of sporting reminiscence, and the first is hardly more revealing than the second: Mr. Asquith, golf, George Meredith, flat-racing, Barrie, and boxing—at the most each provides the necessary anecdote. His marriages were both ideally happy; no marriage of his, we feel, once undertaken could be otherwise. Even the literal-minded materialism which had nagged rather at difficult times in his life found a happy solution in spiritualist beliefs. His attitude towards literature was hardly more complex. *The Cloister and the Hearth* he considered the greatest English novel; and the three necessary qualities of a writer were enumerated in order: "The first is to be intelligible, the second is to be interesting, the third is to be clever." He himself, apparently, hovered short of the third. In his own work he put first, not the Sherlock Holmes stories, but such wearisome historical novels as *The White Company*, which satisfy neither the adult nor the boyish imagination.

> I remember that as I wrote the last words of *The White Company*, I felt a wave of exultation and with a cry of "That's done it!" I hurled my inky pen across the room, where it left a smudge on the duck's egg wall-paper. I knew in my heart that the book would live and that it would illuminate our national traditions.

Venturesome and dull, he seems even in Mr. Pearson's lively pages to out-Watson Watson. And yet not altogether dull, for—while lacking a finer understanding of books or people—he had the impulse to create fabulous and eccentric heroes out of the towering, learned and wildly brilliant teachers of his youth. The clever! Dr. Budd was clever, and there was a Dr. Bell of Edinburgh; from them, and from the wonder they never ceased to inspire in him, came Sherlock Holmes, Brigadier Gerard and Professor Challenger.

The Sherlock Holmes stories were begun when he was waiting for patients to walk up to his door in Devonshire Place. Apparently he spent less time on them than on any of his writings, and they wear much the best. There aren't many heroes of one's boyhood that one can afford or hope to see again; Holmes manages to survive. Perhaps the original silhouette on the blind has lost some of its mystery and glamour, but one enjoys the setting, the backchat, the turn—in the music-hall sense—that Holmes and Watson have made their own. It doesn't matter that in every story they repeat their effects. There is a ring at the bell—"Here, if I'm not mistaken, Watson, is the lady we have been talking about in person." Up comes the visitor, to be asked, almost before she can sit down, "Do you not find with your short sight it is a little trying to do so much typewriting?" That, of course, will be explained, after the lady had poured out her woes and departed, to Watson who will object, "But I saw as much as you did." "Ah," comes the longed-for reply, "you saw, but I observed." Then, later on in the case, when Watson is passing an opium den in the East End, the most vicious-looking Lascar there will say "hist!" and it will turn out to be Holmes. If we are lucky and the solution is slow in coming, Holmes will go to a concert and wave his hands gently in time to the music or sit up all night smoking from a pile of shag which will be gone by the morning. And Holmes quoting Flaubert or straightening the poker! Holmes with his gold snuff box, chemical experiments and monographs on tattoo marks and cigar ash! His pocket Petrarch, his ring—a gift from "the reigning house in Holland!"

It's laid on with a trowel, and that's half the fun. Holmes, of course, and Watson, too, had to be always introducing themselves afresh, because of the nature of magazine writing; and even when they were well known to readers, Conan Doyle kept on repeating the trick. It was a sound instinct, as was also the use of local colour which now immensely strengthens the sentimental appeal of the tales. The fogs, the pathways through the snow, the clopping hoofs, the bell that can be pulled till the whole house rings—what would Baker Street be without them? A lost London rises even from the moment, in one of the adventures, when Holmes says to the commissionaire, "Run to the advertising agency and have this put in the evening papers," "In which, sir?" asks the man. "Oh," says Holmes carelessly, "in the *Globe*, *Star*, *Pall Mall*, *St. James' Gazette*, *Evening News*, *Standard*, *Echo*, and any others that occur to you."

It is not merely luck that, as Mr. Pearson puts it, Sherlock Holmes has stimulated the sense of association. He fixes, as Dupin didn't before him and as no similar character has since, the romantic longing for a detective sharper than the sharpest crook, who shall also pull down the police a peg or two. Sherlock Holmes has become almost a legend with us as T. E. Lawrence has with the Arabs. Mr. Pearson tries to extract significance from the fact. He has a theory that, to millions who have never encountered him in print, Holmes is a symbolical figure standing for sport, as Shylock does for avarice, Crusoe for adventure and Romeo for love: "he is a tracker, a hunter-down, a combination of bloodhound, pointer, and bulldog, who runs people to earth as the fox-hound does the fox." This may be so, but Mr. Pearson is surely wrong in thinking that only these four figures from literature have joined the Mother Rileys and Charlie Pearces of popular mythology. Tarzan, he would find (standing for the natural man), is equally well known.

Two other Conan Doyle books, after the Sherlock Holmes series, caught my imagination as a boy: *The Lost World* and *The Poison Belt*. Their hero was Professor Challenger, a bushy-whiskered variant of the eccentric Dr. Budd, and in the first he discovered an isolated plateau in South America where he was able to battle with dinosaurs and pterodactyls. The second described what would happen if the world passed through a poison belt in the atmosphere; the dose, so far as I remember, wasn't lethal and people woke up after a few weeks to find trains wrecked, fires burning, and Professor Challenger enjoying the fun of having predicted it all. Inquiries at the London Library and along the Charing Cross Road have failed to unearth copies of *The Lost World* and *The Poison Belt*. About these hair-raising favourites, therefore, I am able to keep my illusions. Just as well, perhaps, for I notice that Mr. Pearson, who isn't usually over-severe, dismisses them as sad stuff. G. W. Stonier

*Conan Doyle: His Life and Art. By Hesketh Pearson. *Methuen.* 12s. 6d.*

NEW NOVELS

For My Brother. By LINCOLN KIRSTEIN. *Hogarth Press.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Saturnine. By RAYNER HEPPENSTALL. *Secker & Warburg.* 15*s.*

Within the Cup. By PHYLLIS BOTTOME. *Faber.* 8*s.* 6*d*

Rainbow. By WANDA WASSILEWSKA. *Hutchinson.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Of these four novels, one American, two English and one Russian, only the American ignores the war. In the English books the war is an obtrusive background, and in the Stalin Prize novel there is nothing except the war. This, as any social observer would be quick to point out, fairly reflects the intensity of war in the three countries. If the social observer is sufficiently attached to the literary criterion of "actuality" he will be able to place the books in order of merit without opening one of them. Unfortunately his order should be exactly reversed. This might seem a justification of that contrary dogmatist whose criterion is remoteness from contemporary issues. But next week may well show preoccupation with the war in direct, not inverse, ratio of literary merit. After eighteen months of wartime novel reviewing I find the controversy meaningless. "Art for Art's Sake" remains the credo of every reputable novelist and the criterion of every reputable critic, but this law can neither exclude nor insist on any category of raw material. In fact the whole question of whether one should or should not write about anything is false and misleading. More profitable might be a retrospective survey of wartime novels with some purely statistical conclusion. Yet my only conclusion has been that, among the infinite faults of which novelists are guilty, there may be numbered a too great remoteness from life and a too eager partisanship in contemporary issues. Such a conclusion might be arrived at without eighteen months' reviewing.

Mr. Kirstein is in no danger of remoteness, in no danger of the aridity which comes from broken contact. He is a warm, generous, lazy, somewhat slapdash writer, a brilliant and successful amateur. The first, perhaps also the last, impression of *For My Brother* is that it is written by an extremely nice man. Nor, despite those who have out-Wilsoned Wilson, those who have exalted the depth of a writer's wound into the criterion of his excellence, does this imply any superficial optimism or benevolence. This is not a great novel—in some sense it is hardly a novel at all—but it is an absorbing, sensitive and most readable book. It is a good and an endearing sign when a writer can describe food, for food, quite apart from gourmet exaggeration, is an intrinsic and illuminating element of life.

> The food was fried baby cactus with eggs and sausage, delicious food. It was all very finely, delicately done, the eggs so light and feathery, all just like the cobwebby crochetting. There were very small dainty tortillas, toasted and filled with ground peppered beans, powdered cheese on top, au gratin.

Before I am reminded of starvation in Europe let me palliate my misplaced delight by adding that this meal was provided by the poorest of poor Mexican families.

The hero of this novel is a young American citizen of Mexican and Indian origin whose family has settled in Texas. The theme is the disruptive effects of transplantation and the conflict between Mexican and United States civilisation. The hero is happier in Mexico than he can ever be in Texas, but even over the border he is to some extent a "gringo", to some extent tainted with the newer world. As a picture of what I take to be the most European country on the American continent, *For My Brother* is brilliantly vivid and convincing. Without disguising the poverty, drunkenness and savagery of the Mexican poor, the arrogance and ignorance of the rich, Kirstein has lovingly revealed a civilisation of great beauty and charm.

A lazy book, loose and shapeless, telling its story without the least regard for continuity. But with such a book half the pleasure is in the casual digressions. The style is undistinguished but unobtrusive.

> Chano and I got along as well or even better than many brothers, even though Chano was eight years older. He never asked me to play with his gang as kids because he honestly did not want me, a smaller boy, hurt, although at the time I never believed it was only that. Nevertheless, later we became good friends.

Though this simplicity may be clumsy at times, it is well enough suited both to the character of the narrator and to the picaresque nature of the book. But it would be wrong to give the impression that Mr. Kirstein has written a Mexican *Good Companions*, all cheeriness and chums. The story is a tragic one, and the death of the wild elder brother is as moving as anything I have read for months. But the sun wins, and deserves, a victory of its own, pervading the book with great richness and enjoyment of life.

It is as disagreeable to write about *Saturnine* as it has been pleasant to write about *Death of My Brother*. Of Mexico, alas, I know nothing, but Mr. Heppenstall deals with a part of London which I know well and with people whom I dimly recognise as nightmare travesties of certain nightmare public-house acquaintances. I doubt whether there is any category in the world more difficult to describe than the *déclassé* drunks and fornicators of Bloomsbury's less engaging streets. As a category they are bogus, self-conscious and unintelligent, their lives nasty and brutish. It would be easy to satirise them, but almost impossible to examine them with that detachment which all human beings deserve at a novelist's hands. Mr. Heppenstall is in grave danger of writing as bogusly as his characters talk; for it is evident that he admires them and that he has dramatised their lives (the only possible dramatisation) in terms of Baudelaire and Verlaine. The book is a succession of irritations. The exaltation of squalor, the apotheosis of the tapeworm and human excrement, revolts far more by its pathetic self-consciousness than by any simpler impropriety. Astrology, all-in wrestling, air raids and insanity weave their tortuous threads through this preposterous book.

But this is not a complete picture. The irritation of the book is that its author has real imagination and real ability. His desire to be original, though often disastrous in its intensity, is by no means a despicable quality. It is to Mr. Heppenstall's credit that he has not been content simply to write one more competent, worthless book on conventional lines. By his own methods he sometimes achieves at least an iridescent putrefaction which is uncomfortably vivid. In one passage there is a brilliance of descriptive writing which makes one howl to think of its unworthy setting.

Within the Cup is written in the form of a private diary kept by a refugee Viennese psychologist between April 1939 and May 1941. I take it that the intention is to provide a picture of English individuals and English society confronted by the various stages of war during those years. But the picture is seen through the eyes of an Adlerian, and a further intention is to propagate the theories of that particular master. The book is written with the easy and undistinguished assurance of a near-best-seller. If there is not one memorable sentence, there are also very few bad ones.

Everything depends on the character, the theories and the behaviour of Rudi von Ritterhaus. He is a ninepin boldly presented by Miss Bottome to be either worshipped or knocked down. The claim would appear to be that the priests have defaulted, and that it is now time for the psychologists (Adlerian) to take over their functions. Indeed the conflict is made plain by the presence of a saintly but bigoted parson who is worsted in every conflict with the psychologist. Rudi is undoubtedly more humane, more tolerant and more perceptive than the great majority of priests. His claims to the succession are good, and I have no doubt that before long he will achieve it. The question that remains to be answered is whether the role, whoever fills it, is a desirable one. Rudi interferes grossly with the private lives of everyone he meets, and he wins, by the decision of Miss Bottome, invariable confidence and invariable good results. In real life I suspect that so confident and doctrinaire an intruder would be given very little quarter. But if it is true that the psychologist can wield so arbitrary a power over other people's lives, the prospect is not only odious but full of danger. For all his excellent qualities I found Rudi a sanctimonious prig, at best a frying-pan from the priest's fire.

Rainbow, an account of a Ukrainian village under German occupation, will reach a wider public outside the Soviet Union than Molotov's White Paper on German atrocities. In this it will perform a valuable function, although it bears little relation to a creative novel.

PHILIP TOYNBEE

A NINETEENTH-CENTURY REBEL

Auberon Herbert: Crusader for Liberty. By S. HUTCHINSON HARRIS. *Williams & Norgate.* 15*s.*

Only in those of us who have well passed the meridian, and whose mental youth was occupied in searching for and critically examining all sorts of metaphysical guesses at social schemes which seemed to blend fair play with human psychology, only in these will the name of Auberon Herbert, that curious blend of Liberal, Radical, and hereditary aristocrat, stir ancient memories.

He was born in 1838, the youngest son of the third Earl of Carnarvon; his mother being Henrietta Anna Howard, a niece of the Duke of Norfolk. At the beginning of his biography of Auberon's brother, the fourth Earl of Carnarvon, Sir Arthur Hardinge recalled how "the Herberts have given to the service of their country a long succession of distinguished men, many of whom have combined with those gifts of practical sagacity which lie at the roots of statesmanship a touch of romance, a spirit of adventure, a fine taste for art and letters, as well as a chivalrous sense of duty to the oppressed." Auberon himself shared with the oriental mystics a sense of divine immanence in every individual man and woman and child. Hence his limitless understanding and charity. Mr. Harris, in his Introduction, tells us that "Auberon Herbert's great aim was to awaken in all his fellow-countrymen a sense of the nobility of self-dependence (the word used here as the antithesis of servile dependence)."

Some sixty years ago Herbert, writing on his political principles, said: "My object is to build up the rights of the individual, and to establish a system, founded on these rights, under which men shall not seek to pursue their own interests by using the strength which numbers give. . . . From the point of view of voluntary action, and against State coercion, everything would be gained for the future happiness of the nation—for happiness depends more upon kindly relations and kindly feelings than anything else—if poor and rich could be brought to work in friendly alliance for this great end. If it is done by force, it will divide us; if it is done voluntarily, it will unite us. I can only say 'Let us try.'"

One is inevitably reminded of another political philosopher, less aristocratically descended, but similarly a blend of Individualist and Radical.

> What a foul subject is this of doing good, instead of minding one's life; doing good as a dead carcase which is only fit for manure, instead of as a living man—instead of taking care to flourish, and smell and taste sweet, and refresh all mankind to the extent of our capacity and quality. If I ever do a man any good, in their sense, of course, it will be something exceptional and insignificant compared with the good or evil which I am constantly doing by being what I am. . . . It does not so much matter what kind of paper you drop into the ballot box once a year as what kind of man you drop from your chamber into the street every morning.

In the course of his Herbert Spencer Lecture at Oxford in 1905, the year before his death, Auberon Herbert said:

> A few words to prevent a possible misunderstanding. I have not been preaching any form of Anarchy, which seems to me—even in its most peaceful and reasonable forms, quite apart from

...ssible bomb—merely one more creed of force. ...narchy is a creed which, as I believe, we can never ...dly class among the creeds of liberty. Only ...condemning Anarchy we shall do well to ...member that it is the direct product, the ...e child, of those systems of government that ...ve taught men to believe that they may rightly ...nd their relations to each other on the employ...ent of force.

...ere he alive to-day, Auberon Herbert would ...himself much in sympathy with the opinions ...Sir William Beveridge, as expressed by him ...his recent book, *Pillars of Security*.

...ery interesting is Mr. Harris's account of the ...ing between Auberon Herbert and Beatrice ...bb (Beatrice Potter, as she then was). After a ...ride with Herbert through the New Forest ...1887, she wrote in her diary:

After our long ride, fourteen miles round about ...om the station, we were tired. Lunch over, we ...nk into comfortable chairs round the blaze of peat ...d wood fire, sipped coffee and smoked cigarettes. ...eligiously-minded individualism disputing with ...cientific fact-finding; discordant tendencies, it is ...rue, but mutually tolerant. "A woman without a ...oul," said Auberon Herbert playfully, "looking ...pon struggling society as a young surgeon looks ...a case as another subject for diagnosis. Cannot ...ou see it is moral law that should guide our action; ...nd that the only moral axiom in social life is free ...ction for every man's faculties?"

...t a later visit in the same year, Miss Potter ...ords that she and Herbert started a novel ...*king Forward*—an answer to *Looking Backward* ...for which I supplied the plot and the ...racters, while he is to work out a reformed ...rld on individualist lines."

HARRY ROBERTS

THE STARRY PLOUGH

...e History of the Irish Citizen Army. By R. M. Fox. *James Duffy: Dublin.* 6s.

...Red October has distorted, even if in some ways ...as deepened, our perspective of other revolu...ns. Yet, some eighteen months before the ...sheviks seized power in Moscow and St. ...tersburg, a section of the British working-class ...d come out on to the streets, rifles in hand, to ...ke their lives for a dream of national and social ...edom. That revolt of Easter Week, 1916, now ...ms to have been foredoomed to failure, but ...t is no reason for ignoring the contribution ...t its leader, James Connolly, made to revo...ionary technique. Nor should we doubt the ...rage and integrity of purpose that helped ...se ill-armed working men and women go out ...ace disciplined and highly mobile troops. They probably knew, as they marched out from their headquarters at Liberty Hall on that Easter Monday morning, that though they should give their lives, they would fail in their immediate task. But they hoped their sacrifice would be the signal for a mass uprising that would liberate their country.

Connolly certainly understood the odds against them. When Eoin MacNeill cancelled the mobilisation orders of the Irish Volunteers, it meant that the rising would be confined to Dublin; that the more elaborate plans had fallen through, and that as Commandant-General in the city, Connolly would be able to mobilise but a tenth of the forces upon which he had originally counted. The Rising became a sketch of what was intended. But rather than turn the confusion into a rout, Connolly threw the Citizen Army into the van of the conflict. He saw, as later Lenin was to insist, that there can be no playing with insurrection; that a revolution on the defensive is a revolution defeated.

For revolution it was. Though relatively small numbers were involved in the actual fighting, Easter Week cannot be dismissed as a hasty or ill-organised *putsch*. Connolly's understanding of the nature of revolution was too deep for that. "He was a man," says Mr. Fox, "in whose mind the physical force tradition of Irish revolutionary history was always a strong and vital influence." Not that he surrendered to the Fenian tradition of secret conspiracy. He believed in an open and direct appeal to the masses, carrying on his agitation for an uprising by every possible means, defying and outwitting the authorities at every new turn. We find him writing and lecturing on methods of street fighting and on the lessons of the Moscow insurrection of 1905. We see Citizen Army men, armed and disciplined, protecting demonstrations from police assault, guarding their precious Liberty Hall, with its printing press and stores of ammunition and arms; manœuvring around public buildings that they were later to storm or occupy. And always in the background there is Connolly insisting upon the need for united action between the mass organisations of the workers and their vanguard, the Citizen Army.

What was this army and what was its purpose? Originally formed as a workers' defence corps in the great Dublin strike of 1913, it later was to become the only revolutionary organisation which avowedly wished to carry the struggle beyond the primary objective of national independence. It always, whether in 1916, during the war of Independence, or during the Civil War, maintained a separate existence, though co-operating with the other nationalist groups or military formations. Connolly never forgot that there was a class, as well as a nationalist struggle in Ireland, and he feared that in the end the Citizen Army would have to struggle for its principles alone. Just a few days before Easter he ended a speech to the Army: "In the event of victory, hold on to your rifles, as those with whom we are fighting may stop before our goal is reached. We are out for economic as well as political liberty. Hold on to your rifles!"

Probably only Connolly and a few of the leaders had read Marx; in the lives of the majority religious sentiment played a major part, yet from their day to day experience of national oppression and economic exploitation there grew an intense revolutionary fervour as well as a remarkable insight into the tactics of armed revolt. It is one of the tragedies of our time that the defeat of this premature revolution should have handed over the leadership of the nationalist movement to more reactionary elements.

There are many moving episodes in this fragment of the history of the struggle of ordinary men and women for human dignity and freedom. I find it difficult to believe that I did not know the Countess Markievicz, the fiery Jim Larkin, the quiet and courageous Michael Mallin, Connolly's brilliant Chief of Staff; that I had not seen that impressive ceremony when the Republican flag was hoisted over Liberty Hall, or witnessed the fighting at Stephen's Green, City Hall or the G.P.O. And there is the unforgettable picture of Connolly calling his men in one by one and putting to each the unequivocal question "Are you prepared to come out in a Rising if the Citizen Army stands alone?"

> Most of those present answered like good soldiers' "Yes, Mr. Connolly." "Certainly." "Of course.". . . . One man, Robert de Cœur, ventured to probe deeper.
>
> "To act alone," he said, "but that would be throwing our lives away."
>
> Connolly returned his direct look.
>
> "Well," he answered slowly, "that is how it is."
>
> "If that is how it is," said Bob de Cœur, "then I am with you."

England, as well as Ireland, will do well to remember the stature of these pioneers who marched under the banner of the Starry Plough.

NORMAN MACKENZIE

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VERY HEAVEN

Where Love and Friendship Dwelt. By MRS. BELLOC LOWNDES. *Macmillan.* 12s. 6d.

Mrs. Belloc Lowndes raised a touching and impressive monument of domestic piety in her book *I, too, Have Lived in Arcadia.* In a second volume she now continues the story. Again we are enveloped in the hothouse climate of French family life: we admire the refinement and sensibility, we wonder at almost monstrous flowers of self-sacrifice, we catch even an occasional glimpse of the resentments inevitable in so cabined an environment. Some sagacious Frenchmen consider that the strength of the family spirit, in France as in China, has not been an unmixed blessing to the nation. But Mrs. Lowndes is visited by no such uncomfortable thoughts, doubtless because her own family was exemplary no less in public service than in domestic manners. Her English mother and her French grandmother had great nobility of character, and it is striking to find relations with a daughter-in-law sustained with so complete a reciprocity. That this new book contains no further extracts from their correspondence must excite disappointment. Students of the period will find in it, despite an occasional inaccuracy, a picture of absorbing interest.

When Mlle Marie Belloc returned to France in 1885 she found the way of life much more agreeable than in England. She tells us too little of her schooling in an English convent, but when living in Sussex she had shared neither the outdoor interests of the neighbouring girl barbarians, nor their taste for vulgar flirtation; and the gulf had been widened by a lack of money—always a more painful incommodity in England than in France. The girl was given little formal education, which is odd, as her mother was a blue-stocking and the author of very serious books. She was, however, encouraged to read. No book was forbidden to her except *La Nouvelle Héloïse* and *Les Trois Mousquetaires*—so she immersed herself in Balzac. She made friends with a girl in the neighbourhood of their home near Bougival, Jeanne Déroulède, and then with her brother Paul, the prophet of *la revanche*, for whom she has retained an unbounded admiration. This leads her to recount that the French Cabinet offered a hundred thousand francs to the man who would assassinate Boulanger—a story current, no doubt, in Boulangiste circles but in my opinion entirely incredible. There is little about Mr. Hilaire Belloc in this book, but it seems likely that his views, like his sister's, have been coloured by a youthful enthusiasm for the fascinating Déroulède.

Mrs. Lowndes's great-grandmother was a Chasseriau, and she describes how her cousin, Baron Arthur Chasseriau, nephew of the painter, spent half his income—and he was not rich—upon buying every picture by Chasseriau that came on the market. The resulting collection he left to the Louvre, where most of it has remained in the cellars. This remarkable painter died long before Mrs. Lowndes was born, but she is fortunate in having met many of the Frenchmen who embellished the opening decades of the Third Republic. For at the age of twenty, having returned to England, she began to write for the press, and from 1888 onwards she went often to Paris to collect material, interviewing many of the most famous figures of the time. In literature, painting and music the second half of the nineteenth century was a period never excelled in French history, and Mrs. Lowndes had the most enviable experiences.

It was far rarer then in France than in England for a girl of gentle birth to embark upon a career, yet Mrs. Lowndes tells us:

> In London it was still regarded as unfitting in some quarters, and amusing in others, that a young woman should be doing the kind of journalism on which I was then engaged. I was never confronted with that attitude in Paris; there the men and women I went to see seemed to think it quite natural I should be gathering material for the English papers. No one appeared to feel my sex had anything to do with the way of life I chose to lead. But the French have always respected the profession of letters.

A more probable explanation, I suggest, is that she enjoyed this indulgence as a member of the eccentric English race, notorious for their disregard of all the decencies. If a French girl had gone, as this *Miss* did, to meet Verlaine in *cafés*, would she have found in the famous respect for literature any protection against censure and calumny? At their meetings Verlaine talked always of his longing for his wife's forgiveness; and on one occasion, in England, at midday he suggested to the girl that they should say the Angelus. So down they both knelt. "I have often been with a fellow Catholic when 12 o'clock began striking, but that was the first and last time that such a suggestion was made to me." Maupassant told her of his admiration for *Tom Jones*, "one of the great novels of the world, but you must not look into it till you are married." Anatole France expressed his adoration for his mother; Daudet, with whom she was specially intimate, spoke to her with horror of free love. (He had good reason: he was long crippled, and eventually killed, by syphilis.) Zola also she visited in his house packed with hideous sham antiques. She met Madeleine Lemaire and Détaille and Carolus-d'Ache; Jules Verne, Sardou, Gyp, Lemaître and Louise Michel. She translated the Goncourt journals, visited Edmond de Goncourt, the only snobbish Frenchman she ever met, a survival not so much from the eighteenth as from the seventeenth century, a figure out of Saint-Simon. Of all these she has something of interest to recall, and her book abounds in curious trifles of hearsay history. Her grandmother learned from Mme de Villette that Voltaire always spent St. Bartholomew's day in bed as a sign of mourning; and her mother was told by an eye-witness that the guillotine in what is now the Place de la Concorde was often shifted, and that on the day of Lewis the Sixteenth's execution it was placed near the river so that the crowds on the south bank could see the killing of a king.

Yet to anyone interested in the past the most delightful chapters of Mrs. Lowndes's book may well be those devoted not to the famous but to her French relations and their friends. For they conjure a whole vanished world of the *haute bourgeoisie*—men and women in many ways conventional to the point of narrowness but conspicuous for their dignity, their courtesy and their sense of honour, a society respectful of tradition, contemptuous of ostentation, composed of integrity, and resolute in fulfilling duties. This is a world little known to the English, because the great French novelists have almost always preferred to treat the more picturesque lives of a vestigial aristocracy, a rapacious *demi-monde* or a martyred proletariat. But it was from this world that sprang almost all the men of genius to whom the Third Republic owes its imperishable fame.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

Livy, VII (Books 26 and 27); translated by F. MOORE. **Dionysius of Halicarnassus,** Roman Antiquities, IV. (Books 6 and 7); translated by E. CARY. **Josephus, VII.** Jewish Antiquities (Books 12–14), translated by RALPH MARCUS. *Loeb Classical Library. Heinemann.* Cloth 10s. Leather 12s. 6d.

These three latest "Loebs" are all histories. The seventh volume of Livy has a certain topical interest at this moment; for it opens with Hannibal at the gates of Rome in 211 B.C., and covers the events of the Punic War in Italy, Sicily and Spain during the next five years. The 6th and 7th Books of Dionysius deal with the conflicts of patricians and plebs

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Week-end Competitions

No. 712

t by C. Urchin

The usual prizes are offered for the best farewell ne between a patient and his psycho-analyst, a rate and his sergeant, or a lady and her Pekinese. mit 200 words.

LES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and uld be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great rnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor first post on Monday, October 4th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves right to print in part or as a whole any matter t in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. not be returned. When no entries reach the uired standard no prize will be awarded.

ESULT OF COMPETITION No. 709

t by Audrey Hilton

The usual prizes are offered for the most enter- ining speculations (limit 150 words), upon the dentity and background of one of the following rsonages, observed during a journey :—

The Bony Woman. Lank blonde hair, a heavy coat ver a white tennis dress, a black beret with a iamond clip. She takes from an Asprey-ish nvelling bag an orange, and eats it genteelly.

The Dark Little Man. Black suit, thick spectacles, wo gold teeth, patchy sunburn. He reads a manu- cript in unrecognisable characters, and every few oments he spreads one hand in front of him and oks at it intently.

The Man in Plimsolls. Outdoor skin, good brown uit, identity bracelet. He keeps close beside him suitcase with straw trailing out of it.

port from Audrey Hilton

in "place-your-neighbour" I think the real fun in finding the normal explanation for curious s, and on this account I have rejected a whole bundle of unlikelihoods. A runaway dictator was perhaps the farthest fetched of these, and, almost as remote, Nell Gwynn for the Bony Lady (it wasn't angles, I think, that earned the royal diamonds). "Pax" sent the best of several "My dear Watson" entries, and John Thornton, among others, cast the Little Man as a refugee. The conspicuous hand belonged to a leper (J. J. Nevin), a Greek with a ring (J. Brown), a gloating wife-slapper (W. H. G. Price), palmists galore, and a sad little pacifist thinking of his son strangling a German (C. Stone). The Man in Plimsolls concealed everything in his straw from a tea-set (D.A.) to Prendergast's head (Petty Official). Stanley Sharpless confessed himself recognised: "That's me: product of a fin-de-siècle parturition (unplanned) in Stratford, E." I liked G. Ford's onion seller in plimsolls (just released from imprisonment in 1939), also Barbara Strachey's ingenious entry ("One of these Special Training things . . . did he get a ticket from somewhere on condition he carried the suitcase?"). J. Taylor would have had a prize for nice social observation ("A period piece from the Twenties . . . wife of a government official in the tropics . . . no longer . . . queen of her immediate circle"), but I can't do with that trick-ending. Ford Jenkins, in a convincing piece of malice, comes too near to libel.

I recommend Elizabeth Dunn and C.M.G. (the exception to my rule) for prizes of £1 1s. 0d. each. Bill Hopper's seaman and Rond de Cuir's family joke from Malet Street each get a second prize of 10s. 6d.

THE DARK LITTLE MAN

"Oh, Ma, I thought I'd never get 'ere. *Such* crowds, an' Tommy was sick all over the man beside us. Such a funny little man 'e was, Ma—real nice though, with two gold teeth an' a lovely black suit an' 'e gave Tommy a ju-jube but 'e spit it out. I was dyin' to ask 'im wot 'e was readin'—all squiggles it was, not a bit like letters—oh, Ma, I *know* wot 'e was, an' 'e was always lookin' at 'is 'and. Oh! *why* didn't I think of it, only with Tommy bein' sick over 'im maybe I couldn't 'ave asked 'im. An' 'e was all sunburned—peelin' off it was, like as if 'e wasn't used to it. Oh, Ma, it was an *Eastern* book, I seen one on the pictures. 'e was a fortune teller—maybe it was *Astro* 'emself—were's the Daily Horror, quick—oh, *Ma* you *didn't* and you know we can afford a toilet roll now." (ELIZABETH DUNN)

THE MAN IN PLIMSOLLS

Sea-tanned sailor? Sunburnt soldier? Brown suit; soldier. Straw in suitcase. Suitcase for journey. Necessary? War-time travel. Hungry. Straw in suitcase. Haybox. Hot meal. Stew. Meat rations to fill that. Plimsolls? Of course, brown-shoe-stew in suitcase: last pair, too. What nonsense! Straw in the suitcase? Straw in . . . Straw protects. Protects? Bottles break; money in gin-whisky bottles. Black Market bottles in suitcase. Plimsolls to run; plimsolls to climb. Fugitive? Cat-burglar! Works nights, loafs in sun all day: reads in the paper. Call-up. Hide identity. Bracelet dangerous. Someone else's? Traceable He doesn't care! Sentimental attachment. Woman. Gangster's moll. Passion and crime. Murder! Killed in kitchen; cut up in copper. Head in suit-case! Moll's head. Climb the rocks, chuck it over. Cheerio, Moll! we had good times. Meet trunk with torso Taunton to-morrow!

Thank you. Yes, the window . . . feeling faint . . . the corridor . . . No, no! I'd rather stand, thank you. (C.M.G.)

His outdoor skin and good brown suit somehow spoke strongly of the sea, until the salt tang almost came to your nostrils. There was something of the senior service about the identity bracelet that he wore round his wrist. His plimsolls did not surprise me, although they seemed incongruous. The solution was so obvious as to be scarcely acceptable. He was on sick leave with Chinese toe rot and was enjoying the summer days in surroundings a sailor always thinks of as ideal when he has been several months at sea. From this rural retreat he paid regular visits to the hospital for treatment, and with him he brought for patients eggs from the hens, and fruit from the garden of which he was so proud. It did not worry him that some of the straw in which they were packed trailed from the suitcase. (BILL HOPPER)

THE DARK LITTLE MAN

Recruit to Oriental Section, Ministry of Information. Has been "caned" by Director (hence anxious inspection of hand) for suggesting dramatisation, with pictures by Fougasse (as propaganda among Smaller Nations), of the manuscript—the Avesta, in the original Zend. Director thinks this a matter for Higher Levels—literally, Religions Division. Little Man flew from Persia with high priority and hopes. Hopes and sunburn are fading. (ROND DE CUIR)

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eferring to the unbalancing of the rchant Navies of the world owing to the e increase in United States tonnage, he that the replacement problem of lost was seriously occupying the attention British shipowners, as the moneys re- ed would certainly not be sufficient for purpose. There was also the greater blem arising in regard to the replace- t of obsolete tonnage which had not been

fter making reference to the extra- nary general meeting called for Oct. 8th lter the Memorandum of Association in r to give the company power to carry on business of air transport, he concluded an expression of appreciation of the ge of the officers and merchant seamen facing so bravely and unflinchingly the inevitable in times of war.

e report was adopted.

r. S. J. Forster, proposing the re-election he retiring directors, referred to the fact Lord Essendon had just completed his ond Jubilee with the business.

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